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A Juku Childhood: Children's experiences in Juku attendance and its relation to their well-being in Japan

Mizuho Ozaki

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Social and Policy Sciences

October 2015

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Abstract

Many children and young people in urban Japan attend Juku, a private tuition in after-school hours. Juku supplements school education or prepares students for entrance examinations. This research looks at the role of Juku in children's lives, how children perceive their well-being, and association of these two from the child-centred perspective. The motives of this research are three-folds. Firstly, Japanese childhood seems to be problematised with a concern about their low level of well-being, for which Juku is often raised as one of the influencing factors. Despite Juku being significant for Japanese children, it has been treated with *laissez-faire* approach from fields of both policy and research. Finally, children's voices still appear to be missing in public discourse. For these, it was evident that there is a need to fill the distinctive lack of knowledge.

To explore the topic of interest, qualitative interviews were conducted in urban Japan with girls aged 10 to 18. Other research tools such as timeline, time-use and eco-map sheets are used to perform child-centred research. These tools appeared useful also because this research considered time and space aspects in childhood. Three key findings are suggested by highlighting the relationality of Japanese society. Firstly, Juku experience is not necessarily negative for participant children. In fact, children feel the need of attending Juku, because school pedagogy appears to be unfavourable for them. Regarding child well-being, it became evident that maintaining *Ibasho*, a physical, emotional and relational space, is essential. Given the significance of relationship, these findings are discussed with application of *rhizome* theory suggested by Deleuze and Guattari (1987). Following these, this thesis suggests that current child well-being discourse is deeply embedded in Western-middle class ideology, and it appeared unsuitable when it is applied in Japanese context. Therefore, more diverse cultural-understanding is required when exploring children's well-being.

List of abbreviations:

BwO	Body without Organs
CPGE	Classe Préparatoire aux Grandes Écoles
ECA	Extracurricular Activity
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LBE	Local Board of Education
METI	Ministry of Trade, Economy and Industry
MEXT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
MHLW	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
OSA	Out-of-School Activities
QOL	Quality of Life
SSM	Social Stratification and Social Mobility
THN	Theory of Human Need
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Chapter 1 Introduction

Japanese childhood appears to be problematised. Since the mid-1990s, new cultures developed by children and young people attracted the attention of the ‘adult’ public, and so did the problems and difficulties surrounding them (Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology [MEXT], 2006a; Nakanishi, 2008). These problems include children snapping (*kireru*), bullying, being truants from school, and lacking ‘life skills’; for example, stress management and self-esteem (Tomita *et al.*, 2003; Nakanishi, 2008). In relation to this, there are growing concerns over low levels of well-being or quality of life (QOL) for Japanese children (Sakakibara and Takahashi, 2009; MEXT, 2014e). The suggested factors that seem to be contributing to these problems are children missing breakfast, lacking sleep, extensively using mobile phones, and attending Juku (Sakakibara and Takahashi, 2009, p.163). Juku, alternatively known as cram school, supplements school study and/or supports students to prepare for entrance examinations in different stages of schooling, such as junior high and high schools, and university. The association between the low levels of QOL and Juku attendance suggests that Juku entails some negative aspects (Rohlen, 1980). Nevertheless, since its development in the 1960s (Iwase, 2006c), Juku has been thriving despite its negative aspects. The present study stems from curiosity into why Juku is so popular, and whether it has association to apparently low level of children’s well-being in Japan. This thesis thus explores children’s, especially girls’, perception of Juku attendance and its relation to their well-being in urban Japan.

1.1 Context of the study

Japanese children’s circumstances have been changing quickly in the past few decades, and they now face more pressure to obtain high academic achievement by attending Juku and increased attention on their well-being, both in local and global arenas. The below sections explore the context behind these changes.

Education in Japan

Japanese society has, for at least half a century, been functioning as a meritocracy, where a person’s merit, either income or educational attainment, decides her life (Kariya *et al.*, 2010). Though it is becoming, or supposed to be, less prominent, employers in Japan have paid more

attention to the name of institutions where prospective employees graduated, rather than their Grade Point Average (GPA). Thus, winning a place at a prestigious university has become more important than achieving a good academic record. In this context, in the 1960s when the child population was growing rapidly, and thus academic competition, a market-led academic tutorial institution developed: Juku (cram school). This kind of tutorial institution is common in East Asia (Yi, 2013; Chang, 2013; Ahn and Baek, 2013). For instance, excessive attendance at Juku in Korea (*Hagwon* in Korean) became such a problematic social issue in the 1980s that the government banned it (All Nippon Juku Corporative, 2008). Nevertheless, the public did not appreciate this and the *Hagwon* business remained, accompanied by related social issues, such as young people staying on in public spaces until late at night (Chandler, 2011). Emphasis on academic achievement can mean undermining children and young people's quality of life with stress (Ahn and Baek, 2013), and Japanese children are not an exception. Children continue to attend Juku, frequently coming home late at night (Benesse, 2007).

There are several reasons why children attend Juku despite its long days. As stated above, meritocracy insists that having a graduation certificate from the 'right' university is important. There is also a difference in the level of academic skills required by school education and entrance examinations, meaning that what children study now may not be seen as sufficient for the future (Komiya, 2000). In this case, Juku appears to be closely associated with children's 'futures', and consequently it may be undermining their well-being in the present time.

Sociology of childhood

The above indicates that Juku seems to shed a light on children's futures and not on their presents. The conventional sociology of childhood also focuses on children's futures, resulting in them being considered as not yet human: children are often seen as *human-becomings*. Investment in Juku attendance can be seen as a form of social investment strategy that considers children as *human-becomings* who will stabilise and enhance the future socio-economy. However, a new sociology of childhood that considers children as *human-beings* has emerged in the past two decades (James and Prout, 1997a; Lee, 2001). This change was partly due to the development of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989, which promotes a range of children's rights, such as non-discrimination and respecting their views (United Nations, 1989). Though this change is valuable, more recent discussions about

children criticise the dichotomy of seeing children as either *human-beings* or *–becomings*. Instead, both children and adults have increasingly come to be considered as *human-becomings*, as people at any age keep reconstructing the social order (Uprichard, 2008; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

To consider childhood, time and space aspects are also important, as child experiences can vary according to them. Childhood is a temporal period of life that all individuals experience, and perceptions about it can be different at different ages: new-born babies (future), children (present) and adults (past). Additionally, even if theories were to depart from the dichotomous approach described above, children are still considered in relation to other generations, because it is natural to refer to their chronological age, which signifies their generational position in the social structure (Bromley, 1988). Time is a familiar concept to all people as a linear temporal movement, but it is in fact a fuzzy concept, being experienced differently by different people (Merleau-Ponty, 1945; Deleuze, 1968). These aspects highlight the significance of how children are situated in society and in time and how they experience it when exploring their lives. Similarly, space is also a crucial aspect because children advance their identity by engaging in specific activities in certain spaces (Strandell, 2007). Space is often organised according to social structures, which ascribe specific meaning to it. For instance, home is where family is nurtured and school is for education (Foucault, 1986). In this way, Juku can be seen as an additional life space for children, and it therefore becomes essential to expand considerations of space in analyses of Japanese childhood.

Child well-being

In a similar manner to childhood, there has been a dramatic shift in discourses of well-being, particularly in relation to child well-being. Countries' development and socio-economic strength have conventionally been observed by Gross Domestic Products (GDP), which has also been used as an indicator of people's happiness. However, there are limitations in utilising GDP to assess people's life satisfaction as commodity does not necessarily reflect levels of happiness (Diener *et al.*, 2009). Thus, scholars began discussing what may contribute to the well-being of a country and its people. 'Well-being' as a concept has been contested due to its variability between people in different cultures and times, but a consensus is that it is about quality of life. There are two seemingly agreed approaches to considering well-being: objective and subjective

well-being. Objective well-being (OWB) considers well-being in relation to commodities such as GDP, health standards and educational attainment. It is often simple to achieve a consensus in what may be included as components of OWB, but this is not the case for subjective well-being (SWB), i.e. how people feel. The ways SWB is considered could vary as much as there are many cultures and individuals. As OWB has increasingly been seen as insufficient to consider overall well-being, the discussion continues as to how SWB may be conceptualized and measured.

Furthermore, along with increased attention to children's rights, children themselves have entered the well-being debate. However, similarly to the transition in sociology, it is only a recent development to regard children's voices as essential to understanding their well-being. Child well-being conventionally focuses on their survival, and life satisfaction from children's own point of view has not been considered. Where child well-being has been examined, it has been done only through adults' perspectives and using objective measures such as household income. In these ways, exploring the well-being of children as human-becoming was a dominant approach. Accordingly, children have also not been expected to appear in public discourse, and if they do, they are typically associated with negative outcomes; for instance, smoking and alcohol consumption. Yet, recent approaches to child well-being seek to include positive aspects of their lives in the present, which can be explored using their subjective accounts (Ben-Arieh, 2005). Levels of child well-being have been measured internationally and locally, and there appears to be a consensus in which dimensions should be explored, largely based on the UNCRC. Child well-being can be considered at different levels (macro, meso and micro), and it hence has become crucial to consider the meanings and functions of well-being accordingly. At the meso-Japanese level, it is alarming that Juku attendance may result in stress and pressure on children. Despite its significance in Japanese childhood, there is a severe lack of research conducted in this area of interest. Well-being discourse entered Japanese policy in 2010 as a part of the government's New Growth strategy, and provisional indicators were developed to measure the state of the country's well-being. However, both children and their Juku attendance are hardly considered in the proposed indicators because their lives are often explored in household and school settings instead. As stated above, Juku appears to be extremely future oriented, as was the approach taken to explore child well-being. Here, it seems that a shift in child well-being approaches from a future orientation to a present orientation can be seen as a

good suggestion. Thus, it appeared essential to understand how children perceive their well-being and what may contribute to it, as well as their experience at Juku in the present time.

1.2 Research assemblage

This thesis explores the role of Juku in children's lives, how children perceive their well-being, and whether the two are associated. The research questions of this study are as follow:

How do children perceive Juku attendance in relation to their life and well-being in urban Japan?

1. What are the key factors contributing to children's relational well-being in Japan?
2. How does Juku attendance influence children's well-being in Japan and how does this differ over time?

To achieve these aims, the research takes a social constructionist ontological position and an interpretivist epistemological standing with phenomenological approach. The fieldwork was conducted in urban Japan with using semi-structured interviews, time-line, time-use and eco-maps. The urban area was a centre of investigation, as it tends to have a higher Juku attendance rate than rural areas (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, 2014). The present study focuses on the experiences of girls, because girls typically face particular challenges, especially in relation to work-life balance and having to choose to have a career or a family (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-d). Their age ranged between ten (fifth grade in primary school) and eighteen (third grade in high school), as it is the period of childhood when children are most likely to attend Juku and they have already transitioned to young adulthood. Focusing just on girls places an undue emphasis on one gender, but is a good starting point for further research which considers both genders.

In order to reflect children's voices in consideration of education and well-being, the present study employs a child-centred approach. This child-centred approach sees children as research subjects rather than objects, and conducts research *with* them (Mayall, 2002; in Wyness, 2006). Thus, it considers that exploring children's experiences requires their values and voices, rather than looking at them through the lens of adults. Following the research, this thesis contributes to the world of knowledge with ideas of how Japanese children are expected to be and to become, how they make sense of their subjective well-being, and how children experience education in

the current system.

1.3 Research contribution

This thesis suggests the need for cultural understanding when considering child well-being. Conventional well-being seems to be driven largely by Western individualist ideology and do not take into account the variation in different cultures. The findings of this study suggest that in the Japanese context, child well-being appears to be deeply embedded in relational interdependency. Furthermore, a focus on Juku attendance reveals that schools appear to be diminishing as pedagogical space and time, and community as a life space. This calls for putting emphasis on relational spaces when considering Japanese childhood. Finally, childhood seems to be romanticized, with adults' views appropriating institutionalisation and scholarisation of children, suggesting a need to listen to children's voices.

1.4 Note to readers

This research initially aimed to clarify the state of children's well-being in Japan by drawing upon well-established theories related to child well-being more generally. However, in-depth exploration of the research context indicated that these established theories are not entirely sufficient for the task. Instead, more recent emerging theories in the literature appeared to be more appropriate when considering the research topic and the context. For this reason, in order to support the articulation and application of the emerging theories in this research, a number of diagrams are introduced in this thesis. These diagrams help explain the emerging theories and interpret the evidence gathered for this thesis.

1.5 Thesis outline

This thesis comprises eight chapters divided into two parts; the first explores existing literature and studies (Chapters 1 to 4), and the second presents the empirical findings and discussion of this research (Chapters 5 to 8). The present chapter has briefly mapped the context and issues around Juku education and childhood in Japan.

Chapter 2 provides the context of the education system in Japan. The modern Japanese education system was developed after the Second World War, and its brief history is explored first. There has also been a dramatic increase in student populations, which has led to heightened meritocratic competition. These changes map the setting in which Juku have arisen to ensure

children's academic achievement with parents' financial support. The chapter ends with an exploration of the association between education and gender, as gender is an important aspect due to its implications for the labour market, which still appears to be gender-segregated.

Chapter 3 outlines the emergence of the study of childhood and how it has changed in recent years in both the international and Japanese contexts. As stated above, time and space are also crucial aspects to recognise when considering childhood, and associated notions specific to Japan are introduced. For example, the concept of *Gambaru* (effort) is associated with the amount of time that people put in everyday activities, and it is explored here as making an effort appears to be fundamental value that people hold. Children's lives also seem to be controlled by special spatio-relational notions such as *Ibasho* (a place to be), *Air* (atmosphere) and *Bocci* (being alone). According to these concepts, children are theorised as living in both the present and future, while being engaged in interrelationships with other people in core life-spaces.

Chapter 4 explores the concept of well-being, its theories, and those of child well-being. Using this previous literature, this chapter develops a theoretical framework based on three key fundamental theories: self-determination theory [SDT] (Ryan and Deci, 2002), the three-dimensional framework (White, 2009a) and the model of child well-being (Fattore, 2009). The theoretical framework considers four dimensions that may contribute to children's subjective well-being: agency, material need, self-value and security. The framework also proposes that children's experiences in their daily lives may differ between core life-spaces (including home, school, Juku and community) and across time. These dimensions, spaces and time are seen within the overarching theme of relationship, as Fattore's (2009) study suggests that children make sense of things through personal relationships.

Chapter 5 presents the research method with its child-centred approach, and justifies the utility of relevant research tools in the context of the present study. The first of the empirical findings are explored in Chapter 6 by considering the role of after-school activities¹, particularly Juku, in children's lives overall across time. Time-line data is first used to consider how children's experiences in after-school activities change throughout childhood. The chapter then moves onto case-studies, exploring how children use their time on days they have and do not

¹ 'After-school activities' in this research in the present study refers to both Juku and out-of-school activities (OSA).

have Juku and/or out-of-school activities (OSA), such as piano and ballet lessons. Children's perceptions about and use of time reflects the significance of *Gambaru* for them, and this is considered in the latter part of this chapter. The time-related data leads to the identification of five themes that are associated with children's perception about Juku attendance.

Following the first part of the empirical findings, Chapter 7 presents the data in relation to children's lives in general, with an additional focus on present time. Children's life experiences are explored according to their core life-spaces, including home, school and Juku. As a summary of the findings, end of this chapter looks at how children perceive their well-being. They tend to consider themselves negatively, but it appears that personal relationships can positively influence their well-being.

To conclude the study, Chapter 8 discusses the findings from the preceding chapters to consider what factors may contribute to children's well-being and how children perceive their well-being. The discussion adopts the *rhizome* approach, which considers the world in a form of tuber, suggested by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in particular, as it appears that children see significance in their relationships with other people in their lives.

Chapter 2 Educational context and development of Juku in Japan

2.0 Introduction

This chapter looks into the development of education systems in Japan and the context in which Juku is situated from various perspectives. It is important to consider the country's educational development because it went through particularly interesting developments regarding its education system by adopting foreign schemes (Shimahara, 1979). First, section 2.1 presents the Japanese education system, which has borrowed many features from Western education systems. Along with the consideration of developments in the education system, the next section 2.2 then explores the relationship between the examination system and meritocracy. Following these, section 2.3 introduces Juku and an overview of its present-day circumstances such as attendance rates, and relevant research studies. In relation to Juku, section 2.4 briefly considers children's after-school hours and out of-school activities (OSA). This chapter ends with an exploration of the gender context in relation to education in section 2.5.

2.1 The Education system in Japan

2.1-1 The development of modern state education

Education plays an important role in developing members of society as citizens of the country. In terms of Japan, the advancement of the education system in the context of modernisation can be linked to the 1868 Meiji Restoration. Until then, the country closed its ports to the world, except for a few favoured countries such as the Netherlands and China. The American Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in 1853 in the south east of Kanagawa prefecture and demanded that the Tokugawa Shogunate opened the borders to foreigners. This resulted in the signing of the Convention of Kanagawa in 1858. Until then, the Shogunate existed parallel to the Emperor, who at that time, had less power. From then on, the Emperor regained power against the Shogunate, resulting in the Meiji Restoration, which is often considered to be the beginning of Japanese modernisation. With regards to education, modernisation can be divided into two periods, from 1868 to 1945 (pre- Second World War (WWII)) and from 1945 to the present (Okano and Tsuchiya, 1999). A range of literature suggests that the Japanese education

system was largely influenced by that of Western countries such as France, the United States and Germany. Thus, the following explores the education systems pre- and post- WWII, in relation to the above three countries.

2.1-2 History of Japanese education pre WWII

The Meiji Restoration saw a dramatic shift in holders of nationalist power from the Shogunate samurais to the Emperor in 1868, accompanied by rapid Westernisation, targeted at catching up with developed countries (MEXT, 1992). There were two kinds of school before the Restoration: *Hankou* and *Terakoya*. The former was a school for children from samurai families (*Buke*) in the Edo era; the latter was for non-samurai families and was publicly run (Iwase, 2006c; MEXT, anon-a). From this, it is clear that the pre-modern education system already ran parallel systems between public and private institutions. Following the Restoration, there were three fundamental reforms in the education system in the Meiji era (Shimahara, 1979). The Ministry of Education was founded in 1871, signifying the beginning of state authority. The first reform, the Education System Order (学制) was established in 1872 aiming to Westernise the education system and unify the country. It included, for example, promotion of the equality of opportunity and individuality, which was adopted from the French centralised² system (MEXT, 1992; Shimahara, 1979). However, the Westernisation of the country along with the education system did not happen as fast as was initially hoped, and a revised version of the Education Order (教育令), which highlights the second reform, was enacted in 1879. The revised Education Order emulated the American decentralised system, with the authorities hoping to increase the autonomy of local areas. It was thought that localities would fit the curriculum to each regional characteristic, instead of continuing to adapt the centralised uniform French system.

Following these reforms, the Cabinet Office was founded in 1885. Arinori Mori was appointed as Minister of Education, and abolished the revised Education Order, because of concerns over excessive decentralisation and possible difficulties in unifying the nation. Mori

² The French system was one of the pioneers, along with Prussia, in the development of national education, pursuing centralised administration around the universities as the authorising institutions under Napoleon (Bowen, 1981).

considered that the pro-Western strategy that had followed the French and American systems was unsuitable for Japan, and instead pursued the Prussian centralised approach for nation building. A third reform then took place under Mori to stabilise Imperial Japan, whereby education became the part of ‘the Emperor’s intent’, which was enforced by his edict the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890. In this Rescript, it was stated that Emperor worship was mandatory (Okano and Tsuchiya, 1999). This worship and nationalism were later strongly embedded as a principle in Japanese society and lasted until the end of WWII.

In sum, the first three reforms saw shifts in educational ideologies. The first transition was from the Shogunate system to a pro-Westernisation one under the French model. The second reform continued the pro-Westernisation agenda, but followed the American decentralised model. Finally, the third shift was drastic compared to the first two, returning back to the ideology of nationalism with a nod towards Prussian corporate nation building.³

After the end of the Meiji era, the Education Council (教育審議会) was established in 1937, in order to develop a fundamental educational philosophy during wartime. The Education Council promoted Education Renovation (教学刷新), which prioritised the ‘*Koukoku no Michi*’ (The road to the Empire). After 1941, primary schools were made into National Schools (国民学校), and junior and high schools were reorganised, but there were difficulties in making further developments due to the intensity of the WWII. In fact, the intensification of the war led to difficulties in operating school education, as an increasing number of older school students were mobilised and many younger ones had to be evacuated to rural areas.

2.1-3 Key events in the development of the education system following WWII

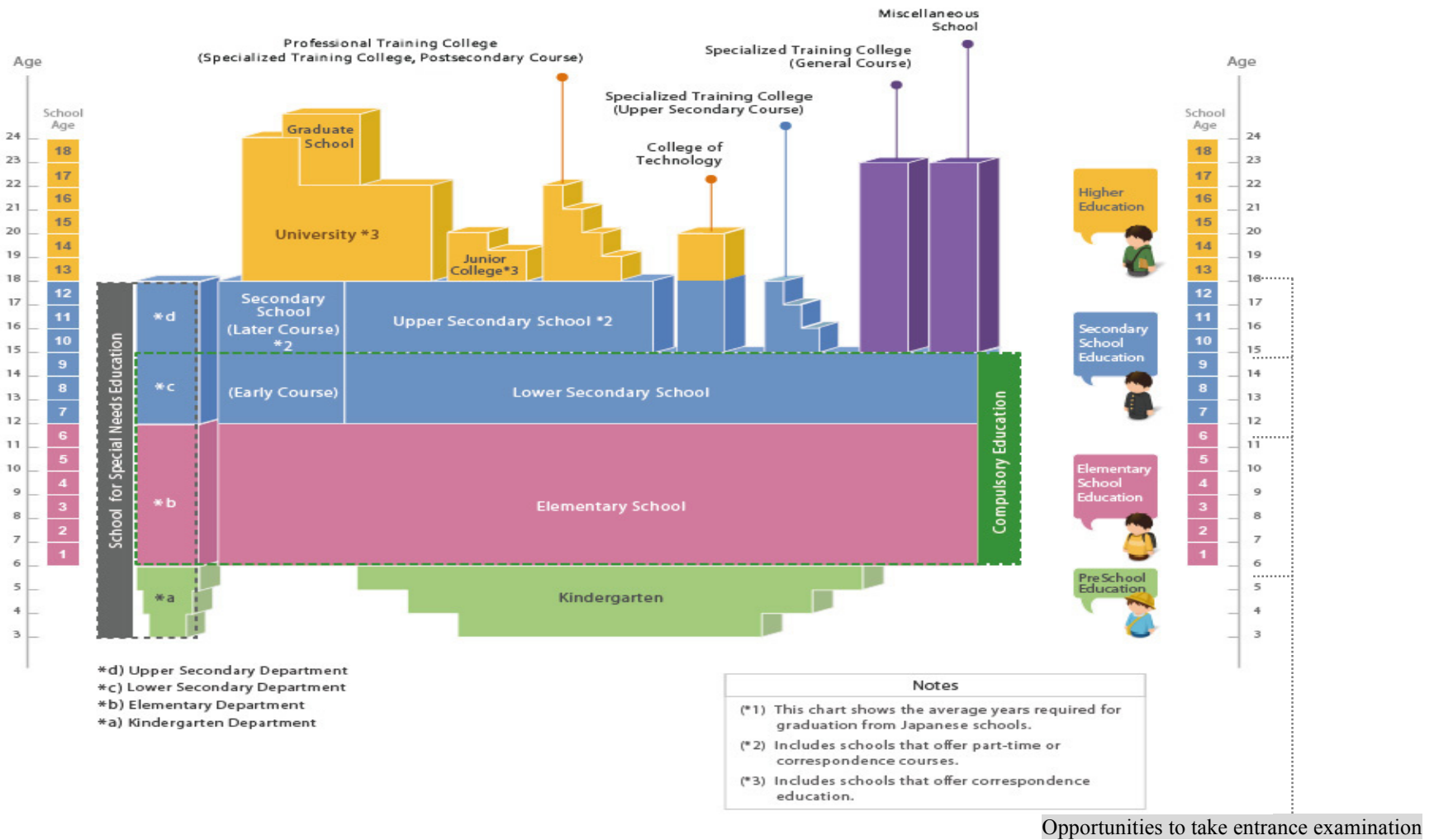
Japan officially capitulated in August 1945, upon being occupied by the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers (GHQ). The GHQ’s fundamental aim was to change

³ Prussian education was strongly influenced by a philosopher, Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814) who proposed building a corporate nation state with individuals as its agents (Bowen, 1981). Due to its weak educational development, Prussia fell behind in its industrialisation, and thus it was pressured to advance its services, which required enhanced higher education. As a result, Prussia achieved approximately a 90% literacy rate, which became the envy of other Western countries.

Japanese state totalitarianism into democracy. Under the rule of the GHQ, the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) was established, being in charge of education and culture (Shimahara, 1979). For many American bureaucrats, Japanese education prior to war time appeared incorrect as it was so different from their system (Beauchamp, 1994). Thus, education professionals were sent from the U.S. to Japan, concluding that ‘democratisation and decentralisation’, as well as giving local authorities increased responsibility, were essential in reforming the Japanese education system.

Following these principles, the Constitution of Japan and the Basic Act on Education were established in 1946 to promote democracy in Japan. These stated the people’s right to have education and guaranteed the provision of free compulsory education. The Basic Act on Education was the first law after fifty-eight years under the Imperial Rescript on Education, and was passed by the Diet of Japan rather than by the Emperor. Along with the Basic Act, the School Education Law was enacted in 1948, resulting in unifying the school system to a linear programme: 6 years (primary); 3 years (junior high); 3 years (high school); 4 years (university); and making primary and junior high schooling compulsory (). In 1952, Japan and the Allies concluded the Treaty of Peace (平和条約), allowing Japan to be independent of the GHQ occupation. This independence then entailed some amendment to the regulations suggested by GHQ and the CIE to adapt to Japanese society.

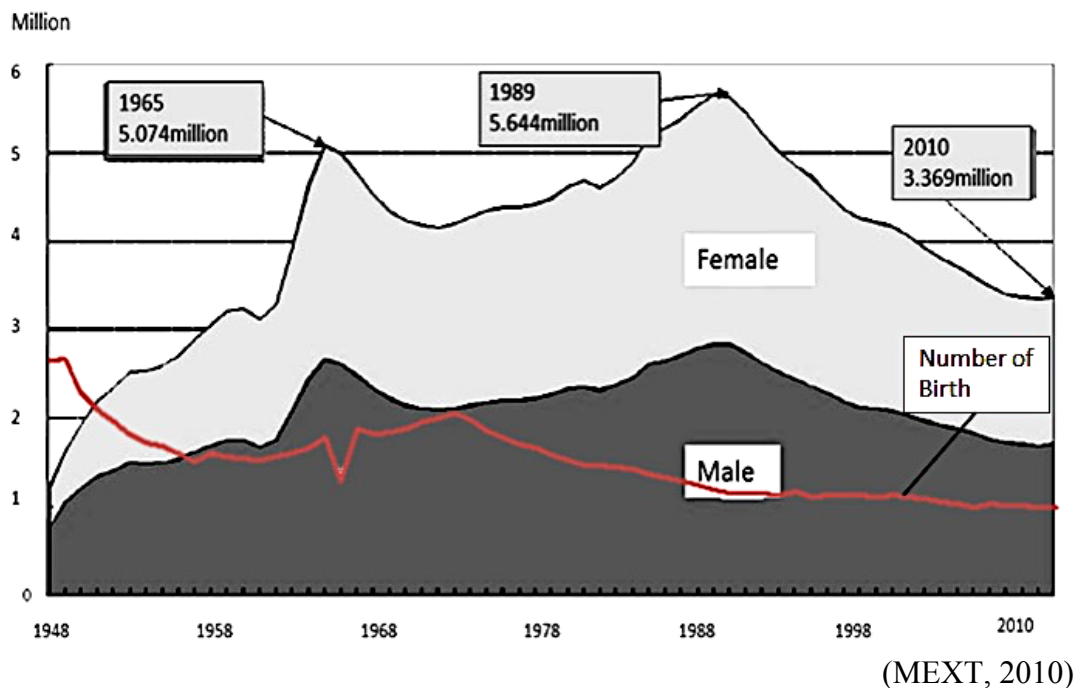
Figure 2-1 School system in Japan



Source: School system as of year 2007(Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology, anon-b)

From the mid-1960s, the Japanese economy experienced the so-called ‘economic miracle’, which stabilised during the 1970s and lasted until the end of 1980s. Accordingly, there was substantial demand from industry to expand education to meet economic need. The number of students seeking to proceed to higher education grew rapidly, and thus a diversification of the education system was demanded by the public. As can be seen from Figure 2-2, the peak in high school enrolment was achieved in 1989. Although this figure shows a decrease from the peak time, the current enrolment rate exceeds 98% of all children, and the decline in absolute numbers is due to the shrinking number of children in Japan. In 1973, 2.09 million children were born but by 2010 the number of births had declined to 1.07 million (MEXT, 2010).

Figure 2-2 Trends in number of enrolled high school students from 1948 to 2010



The Ad-Hoc Reform Council (*Rinkyoshin*) was formed in 1984 under Prime Minister Nakasone, with education cited as the central priority for his government following rapid social changes (Beauchamp, 1994) including some concerns about children and youngsters, such as an increase in bullying and truancy (Horiuchi, 2000). Children’s issues were dealt with in education discourse around this time, and thus education became a hot topic in the public discussion. Along this trend, a consultancy made of education experts, ‘The Kyoto party of world consideration (世界を考える京都座会)’, suggested to liberalise education in order to achieve a better outcome from competition, but also to spend less public budget

on it (Nippon Foundation, 2003). As a result, the level of competition to achieve academic qualification became increasingly heightened.

The Reform Council lasted for three years, and took an example from the neoliberal trend established under Thatcher in the UK and Reagan in the USA. Following them, it suggested three fundamental pillars for the future education system: the ‘individualistic principle’, ‘the shift to lifelong learning’, and ‘adaptation to change’ (Hirooka *et al.*, 2007; MEXT, 2001). The prime minister pushed for this change, as he did not favour the manner in which the Ministry of Education was functioning largely because of its tendency to stick to its traditional system (Nippon Foundation, 2003). Thus, the reform that the Ad-hoc Council undertook to achieve involved tremendous effort in terms of shifting the education system away from the past and towards the future.

At the beginning of the 1990s, several council meetings were held in order to develop the education system following the *Rinkyoshin*’s proposal of the three pillars in concrete proposals. A significant change was brought in by the Central Council for Education (*Chukyoushin*) with the publication of the report ‘The Way Japanese Education ought to be in 21st Century’ in 1996, aiming to increase the people’s ‘zest for living’ (*Ikiru Chikara*)’ and ‘room to grow (*Yutori*)’ (Hirooka *et al.*, 2007; Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2004). *Yutori* was considered essential for children, for it had been predicted that they would face difficulty and have stressful lives in an uncertain future. The uncertainty referred to a shift in the structure of society itself, such as there no longer being life-long employment structures due to economic changes. It was considered that a traditional education would not be suitable for preparing children for such a flexible society. School education until then was also considered as extreme, because it valued cramming knowledge. Additionally, in such a stressful society, giving hope to children by gaining the ‘*Ikiru Chikara*’ became considered equally essential.

These two notions *Yutori* and *Ikiru Chikara* became a central consideration for education policy for a while, and led to the implementation of a ‘Period for Integrated Study (*Sougou no Jikan*)’: a period wherein schools could devise a plan regarding the school or local community characteristics (Japan International Cooperation Agency [JICA], 2004). Furthermore, in order to promote *Yutori* for children, school days were shortened from five and a half days to five days a week, resulting in a cutback of around 60 hours of classes from compulsory schooling as well as a 30% retrenchment in the school curriculum. This was

officially formalised in the 2002 government curriculum guidelines (JICA, 2004). Although the government had a sense of accomplishment with the new curriculum, there were considerable criticisms made by the public and academia concerning the decline in scholastic ability, which then led to intense discussion over issues of academic achievement.

Before this formalisation of the new policy, a document ‘Seventeen Suggestions that Change Education’ was published in 2000 to allow for more variation teaching and voluntary work (Cabinet Office, 2000, n.p.). These suggestions included four major principles: ‘to grow ample humanity in Japanese people’, ‘to develop individuals’ ability and creativity’, ‘to develop new schools for a new era’, and a ‘basic plan for promoting education and new fundamental law for education’. Following these, the Basic Act on Education was enforced in 2006 after more than fifty years of no changes, since 1947 (MEXT, 2006b). This Act aimed to modernise the education system to adapt to present-day society. From these policy principles, it is evident that the focus of the government shifted from the children’s academic achievement to their flourishing overall as human beings.

In 2011 and 2012, the government renewed the centralised national curriculum in primary and junior high schools respectively. The changes were also applied to high schools in 2013. The new curriculum, in contrast to the one in 2002, states that the new education is not about *Yutori* or cramming. The main focus in this curriculum was the ‘Zest for living (*Ikiru Chikara*)’, which stresses the need of society as a whole to get involved in a child’s education. It consists of three pillars that a child should have: credible academic ability, a fertile human nature and physical strength. The new curriculum increased the schooling hours and the contents of the authorised textbooks on top of those set in 2002, in addition to moving language classes (English) into primary schools from the junior high school curriculum (Yomiuri Shinbun, 2012b, a; MEXT, 2012).

2.1-4 Values in the school classroom context

Aside from the particularity of the developments of the education system, there is a characteristic that is worth noting: the function of classrooms. In primary and junior high schools as well as in most senior high schools, students are allocated to ‘homeroom’ classes, consisting of thirty to forty students. Depending on the number of students in a grade, there are several classes, and there are class reshuffles everyone to two years. Some schools stress the importance of children belonging to one class for longer than a year in order to strengthen

the ties among the classmates. Nevertheless, as most students do experience class changes, and there are cross-school activities, they manage to become acquainted with people in other classes. For each homeroom (referred to as ‘class’ below), one or two teachers are allocated and take charge. In most cases, for the mandatory subjects, students take their lessons in these classes, and for optional subjects such as art, they may move to other classrooms.

The form of teaching of homeroom class was adopted from the monitorial system suggested by Joseph Lancaster in England in the early 19th century (Yanagi, 2005), though it was introduced by the American school teacher Scott. Japanese classes began to be treated not only as a group of people, but also as a ‘community’ from the 1930s. Thus, the class (homeroom) is seen as a form of society in Japanese pedagogy and as a tool to socialise or train students to be cooperative (共同化) with each other with strong life skills (Takahashi, 1995). Yanagi (2005, p.21) states that there are five characteristics of such classes:

- 1) Students do not have a choice but to belong to the allocated classes.
- 2) The relationship between students and the teacher is more than academic, and expands to cover sharing life experiences as a group.
- 3) It embraces more things than studying, and such things as taking part in sports days as a group, are programmed in the class setting.
- 4) School classes do not seem to have a clear aim in education, unlike Juku classes where the aim is to improve the academic record and/or succeed in the entrance examination. Because school classes are treated as communities, there are various objectives such as the children’s socialisation and higher educational achievement, etc.
- 5) Although it is a part of a bigger school institution, a class tends to be treated as distinctive from all other ones.

A classroom space (or the class) has been recently seen as a place to ‘learn’ rather than ‘study’, and the difference is clarified by Sato (1999, p.27-28). ‘Learning, he claims ’involves interaction with others to share knowledge while studying, on the other hand, is an individual act, where students simply compile knowledge and have little interaction with each other. That is not to say that all school classes are run oriented towards the learning, but rather most classes in school incorporate a combination of both styles. The collaborative engagement in activities is considered to provide children many benefits, such as feeling a part of a team and achieving something together, rather than doing and being alone. However, drawbacks are associated to the homeroom class system. As explained earlier, this class is treated as a community which covers many different activities aside from

studying, and as a result it creates a strong sense of collectiveness. The pedagogy also takes place collectively so although there is a benefit in it for teachers when they can instruct the mass, but this, in turn, becomes a pressure for children to keep up with all the others. It can also be asserted that the manner of evaluation for academic achievement i.e. based on the child's standard scores, could cause pressure not to fall behind.

Furthermore, Aoki (2005b) argues that the type of school curriculum may drive the school to become record focused. Aoki claims that there are two types of curriculum: 'curriculum-as-plan' and 'curriculum-as-lived experiences'. The 'curriculum-as-plan' is initiated by a body outside the classroom such as the Ministry of Education, and is composed of plans regarding how to teach the children how life should be (Wallin, 2013). Aoki's (2005b) discussion is concerned with the pedagogical approach geared towards making children into single-imaged humans that the ministry considers as desirable (territorialised pedagogy). On the other hand, the curriculum-as-lived experience is a pedagogy that is experienced by the children as well as the teachers in the classroom. For such a curriculum, a teacher is face to face with students, sharing their daily events. The teacher recognises each child as an individual with different names and personalities. Aoki argues that when the curriculum is treated as a plan, the teacher becomes a 'technical implementer' (Aoki, 2005b, p.163).

Outside the classroom, children are required to take part in school clubs. Although most children participate, these clubs were not formalised in the school curriculum guidelines until 2008 (Yokohama City Board of Education, 2010). However, despite recognition of the importance of the school clubs in the curriculum guidelines (Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology, 2008b, a, 2009a), the latest version for the secondary schools no longer has instructions about them. This is because they were put together under the heading of the 'non-academic activity' altogether, but for primary education, the curriculum maintained the guidelines on school clubs as before. Nevertheless, the former guidelines clearly state the value of school clubs and for the primary school level, the aim is for children aged above fourth grade to pursue activities with people with similar interests, separate from their class and the year. For the secondary education students in junior and senior high schools, value is placed on the significance of personal qualities such as the motivation for learning, responsibility and sense of solidarity, which are gained through the students' voluntary participation in activities. It is clear, for this reason, that schools perceive the clubs as a useful means to enhance interrelations across the school as well as students'

engagement in learning and development of skills for the future. In fact, the children have freedom to choose which club to join unlike homeroom classes, even though the schools authorise the activities and the options may be limited. Thus, it can be summed up that clubs are not only formal but also informal associations and children often enjoy the company of the other club members.

2.1-5 The examination system in relation to the current education structure

Exploring the modernisation and development of education, Shimahara (1979) looked over the dynamics of entrance examination systems as a social phenomenon because entrance examinations in Japan are frequently referred to as a war due to their intensity. Kariya (2011) argues that the reference to war is appropriate due to the inclusiveness of the examinations, as they often affect not only the student's life but also surrounding social networks, such as his or her family. The essence of this examination war can be understood with regard to meritocracy and knowledge capitalism (Kariya, 2011). The following explores the entrance examination system and the nature of its influence.

There are four points of time when people are able to take entrance examinations, for entry to primary school, junior high school, high school, and university (see). The entrance examinations for primary and junior high school are mainly for private institutions and include various kinds of tests (paper, verbal, and activity) specialised according to the schools' characteristics. Private primary schools are often attached to junior high and high schools, and students are guaranteed places to attend if they have substantial grades. The entrance examination for junior high school is also mainly for private schools, which are often connected to high schools (with schools integrating junior and high schools: *Chūkō Ikkō Kō*). Preparation often begins from the fourth grade of primary school, and intensifies as the children approach the examination. The popularity of a particular *Chūkō Ikkō Kō* is often connected to the legacy of graduates who successfully attended prestigious universities. Additionally, it is attractive as children can prepare the junior high and high school curriculums in advance with a six-year time scale. If the schools are separate, there are more possibilities that the children have to prepare for entrance examinations twice, while those in *Chūkō Ikkō Kō* can use that extra time to prepare for university entrance. For example, the school teachers can organise timetables and curriculums in such a way that students in their 2nd year of junior high school can already be learning the national curriculum level of the 3rd year.

As for high schools, entrance examinations take place both for public and private schools because they are not mandatory, i.e. not part of the compulsory education system. Again, for both types of schools, those with a higher number of graduates in prestigious universities attract high levels of interest and entrance to them becomes competitive. A distinct difference is that public high schools have a unified entrance examination system administered under the Local Board of Education (LBE), while the private schools in a region do not. The admission system for public high school varies depending on the LBE, but usually comprises the combined report from the junior high school and the outcomes of sitting the LBE's unified entrance examinations. For example, the Kanagawa prefecture, south of Tokyo, employs a school report, an academic ability test, an interview and specialised tests (tests suitable for the characteristics of the school) (Chuman Gakuin, 2012; Kanagawa Education Authority, 2011). Five subjects such as Japanese, English, maths, science and sociology are examined in the academic tests while the specialised tests vary according to schools, but may include essay writing, discussion and sports ability tests.

University admission is even more varied and complicated. Until 1971, when the Central Education Council's 'Fundamental policy to expand school's synthetic education' (今後における学校教育の総合的な拡充整備のための基本的施策について) was published, university admission was based on three principles established by Dr. Edmiston under the post-war GHQ. These were 1) procession suitability test (future oriented), 2) grades of last three years (past oriented), and 3) grade from academic test (present oriented). It attempted to capture comprehensively students' ability with regards to these three time frames. It was then revised to be more suitable to a modern Japanese education, and embraced the need 1) to ensure fairness, 2) sound judgement of adequate ability, and 3) removal of the bad influence of lower graded schools. These new principles are still active in the university admission at present. The uniform first-round entrance examination (*Kyoutsuū Ichiji Shiken*) took place in 1979, in order to measure the students' achievement at the end of high school level education across the country. It was then reformed to become the University Central Admission Examination (*Daigaku Nyuūshi Centre Shiken*), which examines six major subjects of the high school curriculum (Kimura and Kuramoto, 2006; Sakamoto, 1998).

All the public, state and prefecture universities and some private universities employ this Central Admission Examination as the first round of their selection process. Those candidates with high marks from the first round are then able to take second-round

examinations, which are particular to the characteristics of each university and field of study. Most of the private universities, however, carry out various examinations aside from the Central Admission Examination, e.g. offering a different number of subjects and examination formats. There is also an Admission Office Entrance Examination (*A.O. Nyuushi*), which the student can choose to take, based on his or her high school average grade and recommendation from the school to the university. The *A.O. Nyuushisi* is similar to that of a recommendation scheme, but it also entails essay writing, interviews or a practical skill test (Sakamoto, 1998).

2.1-6 Summary: the education system

Summarising the most distinct events associated to education, these are the Meiji Restoration, the Imperial Rescript of Education, the promulgation of the Fundamental Law of Education, the 2002 reforms to include '*Ikiru chikara*' and '*Yutori*', and the recent departure from the '*Yutori*' concept. Following the brief overview of the history of the education system, the entrance examinations for different levels of schooling were considered. As there is 98% entrance rate for high schools, it is evident that most of the children finishing junior high schools end up taking examinations. These entrance examinations are considered as 'war', involving people other than just the student (Kariya, 2008). Regarding these, the phenomenon of meritocracy is important, and so is explored in the next section.

2.2 Meritocracy

2.2-1 General Perspective of Meritocracy

It is strongly believed that the significance of entrance examinations became intensified due to an increased emphasis on meritocracy and Michael Young's (1958) work, *The Rise of Meritocracy*, stimulated significant interest in this notion. Young defines merits as something a person could gain based on his or her effort and potential capability, in contrast to ascribed social status, possession of commodities and wealth (Themelis, 2008). One of the merits can be academic qualifications because of the availability of universal education for all in a society. After the WWII, Japanese society shifted to a knowledge-based economy, in which educational qualifications are regarded as capital, and thus an essential gateway leading to successful adulthood. The understanding of meritocracy has, however, changed over the years. Young later argues that merit was not purely associated with educational

qualifications, but more to the means to gain them; for example, wealth (Young, 1994).

In addition to Young, Collins (1971) advances conflict theory, which approached meritocracy by evaluating impacts of education on social mobility, in terms of years of education and their relation to social origins. The advocates of conflict theory stress how the educational structure is a system in which each social class attempts to sustain their power based on their class backgrounds. This theory is based extensively on the work of Max Weber (1968; cited in Collins, 1971), who argues that education could act as means to secure one's power in order to monopolise his or her status in the social class. Breen and Goldthorpe (1997) put forward Rational Action Theory, arguing that parents and children make choices within the education system in order to avoid the risk of the children finding themselves in a lower social class than their parents. Blossfeld and Timm (2003) consider this point from a different perspective, stating that education acts essentially as a marriage market wherein people with the same level of academic achievement pair up together and sustain their social class.

Brown (1990) proposes that meritocracy based on educational attainment gained by effort and ability is now out-dated, and a trend of 'parentocracy' has emerged in recent years. Under parentocracy, the education that children receive depends on parents' 'wealth and wishes for children's future success' in contrast to the 'ability and effort' of children themselves (Brown, 1990, p.66). Taking Britain as an example, Brown argues that there were three waves in the characteristics of meritocracy. Such waves shifted from the class-based provision of education, to meritocracy within 'equality of opportunity', and onto one based on wealth and wishes. Brown (1990, p.78) characterises the latest wave with three key words: "parental choice", 'standards of excellence', and 'economic freedom'. In other words, it acts as insurance for the children's future well-being and lessens the probability of unemployment. Referring to these key terms, Brown avers that it is even more difficult for the state to regulate inequality in educational attainment, as it is no longer under the state's control, but now depends on parents' economic strength.

2.2-2 Transition from School to Work

The transition from school to work is an important juncture regarding understanding social change and meritocracy. In this context, the length of schooling is often considered as an indicator of educational attainment and investment in that it raises the crucial matter of

human capital (Bradley and Nguyen, 2004; OECD, 1998, p.9). As Müller and Shavit (1998, p.1) state ‘Education is the single most important determinant of occupational success in industrial societies’. Some economic scholars have considered human capital investment from a number of perspectives and two of them are discussed below.

Becker (1962; 1975) explores human capital extensively in relation to the on-the-job training (OJT) and education. OJT refers to workers’ skills training in the workplace rather than in school-based education. The level of investment (ability) in human capital makes a difference in the overall earnings of the worker, due to the additional capacities that this training confers on him/her. Moreover, Schultz (1961, p.1) asserts that knowledge can be considered to be a ‘form of capital’, and is deliberately invested in so as to increase levels of it. Similar to Becker (1975), Schultz also recognises that people themselves invest in human capital, rather than relying on the opportunities offered by firms or educational systems. Shaffer (1961) attacks this notion of human capital investment, claiming that investment is inseparable from consumption, especially in terms of education. This is because it is not clear which specific investment returns to the person as a particular skill, or in this case as a composite of human capital. Shaffer claims that if a person invests in his or her child’s education voluntarily aside from the compulsory public education, it would be difficult to distinguish between investment and consumption. All things considered, this thesis essentially follows this idea that anything that enables a person to flourish is an investment, as it considers children’s well-being in both present and future time.

Transition from school to work in the Japanese context

In the context of Japan, Dore (1976) highlights that human capital investment has increased since the 1920s, when primary education became available to the masses. It was easy for the education and employment systems to adopt qualifications given out by schools as a means of assessment, as it traditionally reflected a person’s class status.

In more recent times, especially since the 1990s, the transition from school to work and the role of educational qualifications has been seen from a different perspective, particularly among young people. Regarding this, various so-called social phenomena such as NEET and Freeter have come to the fore. The NEET is well known in English speaking countries, standing for ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’ whereas Freeter is a Japanese word, signifying those who do not work full-time but only part-time (Kosugi, 2004). Emergence of NEET and Freeters as social problems highlights the deficiency in transition from school

to work in Japanese society. In this context, Brinton (2011) labels Japanese youths who belong neither properly in education nor in work as being ‘lost in transition’, as they fail to achieve the transition between the two social institutions of education and labour. According to Brinton, the Japanese employment system until the end of the bubble economy in early 1990s relied heavily on school and the teachers’ social networks, which uniformed the route to enter employment. However, the strength of the relationship between schools and industries weakened along with the end of the bubble economy, and thus the once uniformed employment route became fragile and the younger generation faced difficulty in finding jobs.

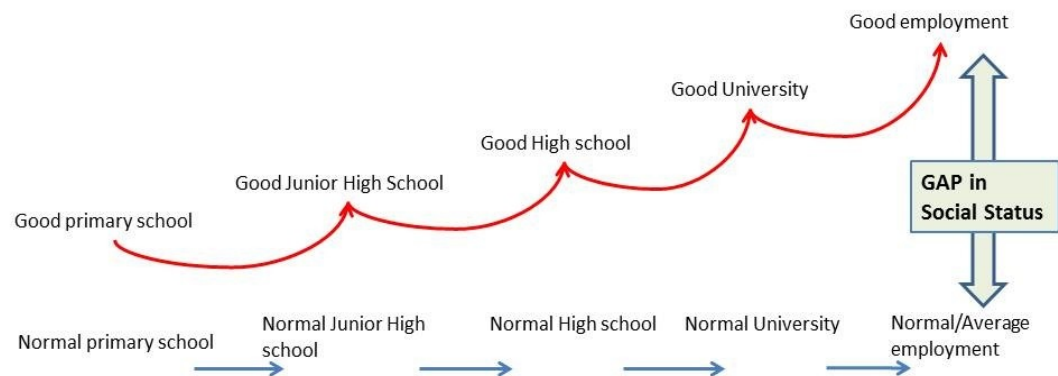
In terms of the transition from university to work in Japan, Hirasawa (2005) asserts that it was often analysed according to the size of the industry and the difficulty of the entrance examinations for the universities from which their employees graduated. This is because firms often employed people without assigning particular jobs, and used a standardised employment assessment scheme even if the individuals’ skill and ability levels varied (Yano, 1993; Hirasawa, 2005). Hirasawa explains that adopting such measures originates from the traditional employment system of the 1970s when companies either requested recommendations of students to universities, or chose employees from specific universities. However, this tradition generated criticism for its lack of fairness and companies gradually adopted the system of judging graduates’ abilities based on the difficulty of a university’s entrance criteria (Hirasawa, 2005). Thus, those who successfully passed the entrance examinations of prestigious universities would have a high potential for obtaining work (Amano, 1984; Hirasawa, 2005). This ‘potential to obtain work ability’ is what Young (1958) terms merit when considering Japan.

2.2-3 Meritocracy in Japan

As the above section presented, the route to enter the employment system is highly associated with the levels of schools and universities in Japan. In the meritocratic world that Young illustrated, children’s knowledge (ability) determined which school they could attend, and the appropriate job in the future. Hence, Japanese society can be seen as highly meritocratic society, where educational levels function as merit (Kano *et al.*, 2007). There are several occasions when Japanese students take entrance examinations, and the results could affect their future lives, such as occupation. The Japanese public generally considers that good high schools, which is evaluated according to the degree of competition in entrance examinations, would prepare students to enter prestigious universities (Kariya *et al.*, 2010).

Thus, a spiral begins to emerge: parents want to put their children into a prestigious university, hence put their child into a good high school, and accordingly wish to have an advantageous position even from the primary school level (Figure 2-3). This aspect can be further observed from the difference in the success rate in entrance examination for public universities (Table 2-1). Though this data is limited to the prefecture of Kanagawa, it is evident that students in private high schools have a higher success rate than those in public high schools. As many private high schools are attached to junior high schools, it appears that being in private school from junior high school level makes a crucial difference in university entrance. In this context, additional education at Juku appears as an investment and/or consumption of future success. By attending Juku, children could have better chance in entering prestigious schools with extra academic support, and for this parents' financial strength becomes a key factor.

Figure 2-3 Spiral of Meritocracy



Source: Created by author

Table 2-1 Average success rate in entrance examination for public universities between 2012 and 2014

High schools in Kanagawa	Number of high schools	Average proportion of students successful in entrance examination	School with the highest success rate
Public high school	118	3.8%	47.2%
Private high school	66	9.0%	64.6%

Source: <http://www.ko-jukennavi.net/inavi12.html>(Ichishin Gakuin, 2014)

Kariya et al. (2010) divide the post-Second World War era in Japan into four stages,

regarding the development of a meritocratic society. There are two factors that affected the shifts in the stages. First, the opportunity to obtain higher educational attainment has increased dramatically since the 1960s due to an increase in high school enrolment rates. Secondly, there was a significant increase in a number of industries that require higher level academic and technical qualification in the past century, and forms of employment have changed from there being less primary to more tertiary sector employment with higher incomes which has caused an overall increase in disposable incomes (Kariya *et al.*, 2010).

The first stage occurred just after the WWII (*ibid.*). There was already severe entrance examination competition, but it was limited to the children from rich families. The second stage evolved when the education system was drawn together into the 6-3-3 system with an increase in the number of high schools available in the country. However, during this phase, social inequality was persistent and the sense of unfairness matched with a strong degree of competitiveness grew accordingly. The third stage emerged in the 1970s when the majority of the population achieved an above average income level and many became able to experience higher education. A tracking system developed around this time whereby a person's opportunities become limited or expanded depending on what he or she had achieved in his/her past (Kariya *et al.*, 2010; Ono, 2001). As it can be seen from Figure 2-3 above showing the spiral of upwards achievement, those with success in their early schooling have a greater advantage than those without. There may be equality of opportunity for entrance examinations, but the possibility in success is limited to certain people with 'merit', such as wealth and intelligence.

As school attendance covered nearly the whole child population, the quality of education mattered more rather than just having a school qualification. Having a better quality of education augured well for the child's future, such as when it came to the chances of admission to university (Kariya *et al.*, 2010). Accordingly, winning a university place through meritocracy by attending a prestigious school increasingly became an accepted norm. Kariya *et al.* (*ibid.*) argue that Japan developed along the pathway of meritocratic development, from one which was based on class differences, to one judged according to a student's ability and effort. Nevertheless. There is a new trend; the fourth stage has been identified as based on inequality in exertion. That is, the level of effort put in by a learner can be affected by his or her social background rather than the individual's desire. Kariya *et al.* (*ibid.*) suggest that this is in keeping with the ideas of parentocracy (Brown, 1990) and

rational action theory (Breen and Goldthorpe, 1997).

2.2-4 Invisibility of children in the meritocracy discussion

The theories of Brown (1990), Breen (1997), Goldthorpe (1997), and Blossfeld and Timm (2003) to the context of Japanese entrance examinations and the nation's meritocratic system can be considered in relation to investment in children with parents paying for Juku. This aspect of Juku attendance will be explored in the following section, but to preview, parents who want their children to succeed in their future lives and who have the enough financial backing send their children to Juku. It might be the case that the more resources the parents have, the more time children can spend at Juku because pupils take separate classes for each subject and the tutoring fees are applied individually. Thus, those with lower income may be able to take only one subject, while those with strong financial status can take multiple subjects. The former would have less academic support but freer time, but the latter would have more academic support and less free time.

The theories on meritocracy noted above are useful in understanding the extent of education's function in creating and maintaining social stratification, as well as parents' expectations on children. The perception of meritocracy from the children's viewpoint appears to be lacking. Even though the rational action theory recognises the parental and children's rational choices, most aspects of these theories consider parents as the active agents and children as merely passive objects. If children do not have a voice, there would be no difficulty in the parent-child relationship, but this is not the case. It is thus important to recognise that they must have capabilities in making choices, even if the level of agency may be different from that of adults. This aspect of agency is further considered in Chapter 3 later.

2.2-5 Summary: Meritocracy

Meritocracy is globally operated, in order to achieve high levels of human capital to maintain the higher positions in society. It has shifted from a class-based to an ability-based society, and then to one based on parents' financial power. With regard to the transition from school to work in the Japanese context there still is a tendency to measure a person's ability from the status of the university accessed, which, in turn, is taken as an indicator of the individual's 'merit'. In order to increase their child's level of recognition, parents may invest in out of school tutoring (Juku) for their child from an early age. The following section thus

introduces and explores Juku as well as children's after-school period.

2.3 Juku

2.3-1 What is Juku?

The sections above explored the Japanese education system and the extent of meritocracy within it. From this investigation, it is apparent that the education system and meritocracy created an opportunity for Juku to be a vital player in Japanese education. Juku, put in simple terms, 'cram school' or 'shadow education', is a privately run supplementary educational industry (Stevenson and Baker, 1992). Although a seemingly straight-forward concept, Dierkes (2008) raises concerns over both aspects of its definition and suggests that when researching about Juku, its positive and negative aspects and associated issues should be kept in mind. It is of note that, although Juku has an educational function, it is not under the administration of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as schools are, but is administered under the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI). Juku is thus considered a commercial enterprise, while schooling is seen as a public institution.

Cram school attendance is common in the East Asian region, there being Hagwon in Korea and Buxiban in Taiwan. According to Bray and Lykins (2012, p.8), the exclusive development of private tutoring in this geographical region is rooted in Confucianism, 'which values educational achievement and qualifications as a major route to personal and family advancement'. Nevertheless, Dierkes (2011) suggests that Juku can be found world-wide. For example, there is the French system of 'prépas', or Classe Préparatoire aux Grandes Écoles (CPGE). It is a preparatory course for Grande École, which requires students to pass a national examination (Alcouffe and Miller, 2012). The major difference from the East Asian situation is that it forms part of the secondary education system, but governed differently from the public school system (Kaiser, 2007). Though the structures of these institutions vary among different countries, the main objective of all is the same, aiming at successful entrance at the most prestigious schools and universities in the nation.

Komiyama (2000) identifies four kinds of Juku: those preparing students for successful entrance examination; supplementary; comprehensive; and education principle. For simplicity, the first type is called 'admission Juku' in the rest of this thesis. The admission Juku prepares students to pass entrance examinations by teaching appropriate strategies and

efficiency regarding learning, or in other words, by ‘cramming’ knowledge. It delivers subjects in advance of the normal school curriculum schedule and for this reason, students need an above the ordinary level of knowledge in order to follow the Juku curriculum. This admission Juku’s emphasis on winning the entrance examination competition can be detected in the marketing used often in its advertisements, which focus on telling potential recruits how many of their graduates enter prestigious schools and universities, rather than aiming to foster students’ pleasure of learning (Sasaki, 2005).

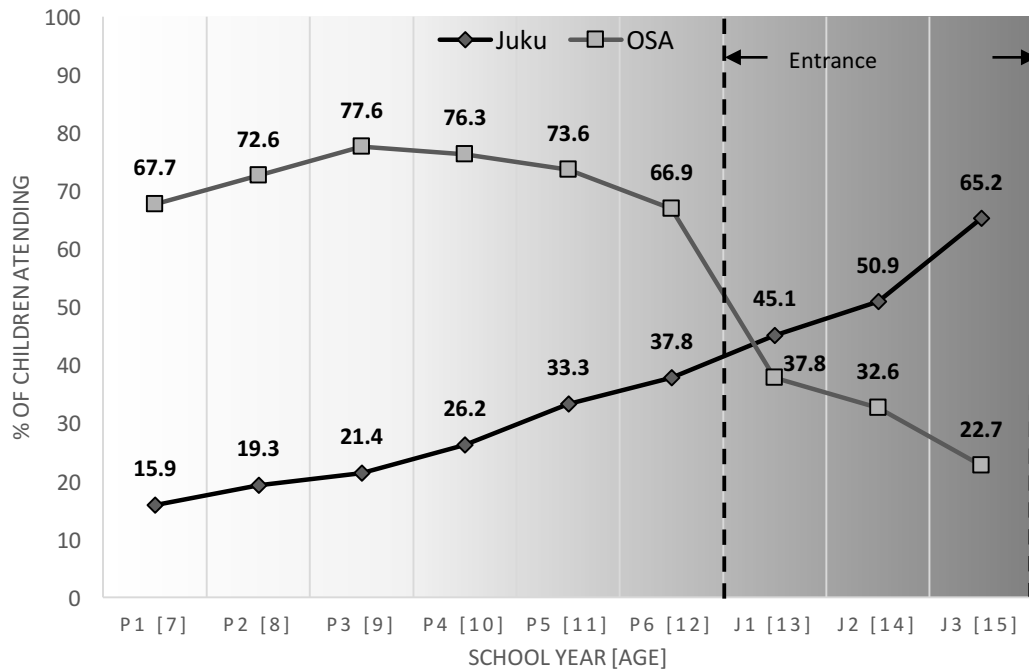
Supplementary Juku adds to the knowledge that students learn at school. In essence, it can be considered as synonymous with tutoring in the British context. The third kind, the comprehensive Juku, is a combination of the above two: admission and supplementary Juku. Due to the possibility of learners making customised combinations, this type of Juku can offer courses that are more specific to students’ needs (Komiya, 2000). Finally, the last type, education principle Juku is for those children who find school life difficult. These include not only those who tend to fail school examinations, but also those who feel they do not fit the school environment. As it can be seen from the varieties of Juku available, students and their parents are generally able to find options suitable for meeting their needs.

There are several styles of teaching format in the Juku education provision. There is a major difference between ‘group’ and ‘individual’ teaching, which does not concern the number of students and teachers, but pertains to the curriculum. The ‘group’ teaching provides the curriculum to the group altogether, while in the ‘individual’ situation, each student can follow the curriculum at her own pace. These are the two basic forms of Juku delivery, but the size of the classes can vary extensively across the different Juku companies, from one to twenty, thirty or even more students in a class (Woo, 2011). There is also considerable variation in the size of Juku companies, ranging from the nation-wide ‘mammoth’ ones; for example, *Kumon*, through regionally based middle-sized ones e.g. *Chuman Gakuin*, down to privately-run individual Juku, where the tutor holds a class at his or her home. Furthermore, the development of information technology has allowed for the provision of classes through recorded videos or online (Murakami and Ueda, 2003). Although this is still a little used format, it undoubtedly will become increasingly popular in the near future.

2.3-2 Data on children's attendance at Juku

To report on the circumstances of children's Juku attendance, MEXT conducted research on children's education outside of school in 2007. Similar research had been previously investigated in 1985 and 1992 so this study could shed light on changes in parents' and children's approach to education over preceding decades (MEXT, 2008c). Figure 2-4 below shows the percentage of students attending Juku and/or out-of-school activities (OSA), such as piano lessons. As it can be seen, around 16% of first-year primary school students attended Juku, which gradually increases to 38% at the end of primary school and 66% at the end of junior high school. To put it differently, the closer children approach the entrance examinations, the more they are likely to attend Juku. This trend is also seen in the spending for out-of-school education including Juku. A survey conducted by the MEXT shows that for each school level including high school, final year students spend more money than first year students (MEXT, 2015a). It needs to be recognised that for each school level in Figure 2-4, both those who are already in private schools and who are in public schools are included. Aside from that, high school entrance examination is required for those who are in public junior high school who pursue higher education, and there is benefit in attending Juku from the primary school level. As explored in section 2.2-3, entering in private primary school from an early age appears to be beneficial for success in university entrance examinations. In this case, those who are in public primary school may attend Juku with an aim to be in private junior high school, and those who are in private primary school may attend Juku to advance further in the academic competition. This graph, thus, supports the significance of meritocracy from an early age. Moreover, this data shows that as Juku attendance increases, OSA attendance decreases correspondingly. The time spent for Juku increasingly replaces non-academic activities, as children grow older.

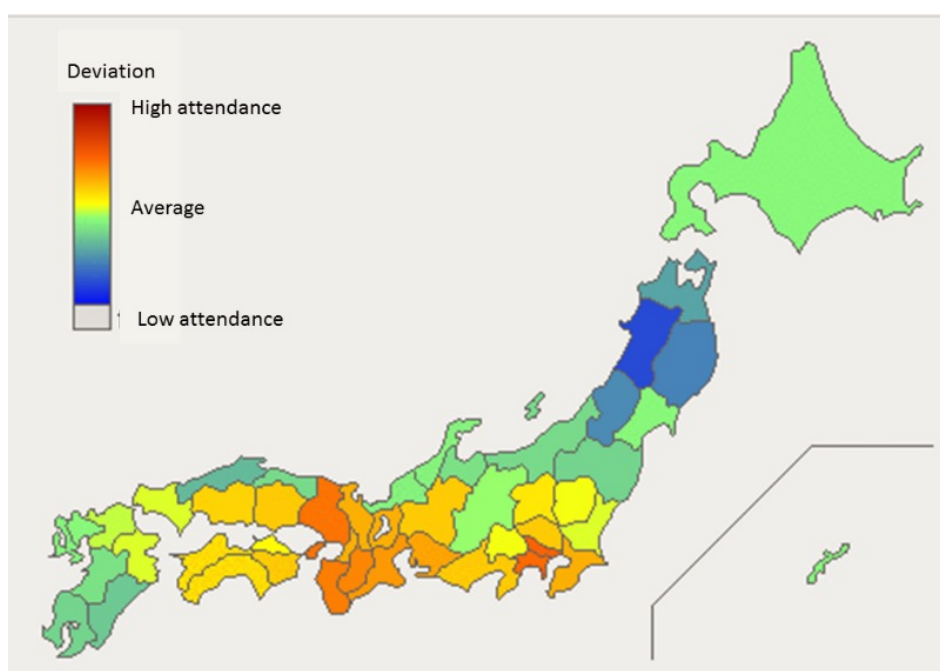
Figure 2-4 Trend in the proportion of pupils attending Juku or doing extra activities over the school years



Note: P: Primary school JH: Junior high school OSA: out-of-school activities
Source: Report of factual investigation on children's educational activity outside schools (MEXT, 2008c)

With respect to geographical distribution of Juku attendance, it appears that it is more prominent for children in urban area than those in rural areas (see Figure 2-5). From this map, it is clear that areas around Tokyo and Osaka (in dark orange) have the highest Juku attendance rates. Mimizuka (2007b) attributes this characteristic to a high competitiveness caused by large educational options in urban areas. Taking a number of private junior high school as an example, there are 359 private junior high schools across designated cities in Japan, of which 143 schools are based in Tokyo (MEXT, 2015b). By having more options (in this case more private schools), parents may want to send their children to the best private school. For families with fewer educational options, there is low incentive to invest in education, as there is no need to. However, despite the high incentive in educational investment in urban areas, data on scholastic ability shows that children in Akita, who have the lowest Juku attendance rates, achieve the best (Table 2-2). One of the explanations for this result could be because of bigger income inequality in urban areas than the rural (Mimizuka, 2007b). Nevertheless, the achievement of children in Akita shows that the significance of Juku varies across Japan, and Juku attendance is not the only way to succeed academically.

Figure 2-5 Juku attendance rate of public junior high school students



Source: Map created in website <http://todo-ran.com/t/kiji/14737> with a data taken from National Institute for Educational Policy Research (2014)

Table 2-2 Top 5 prefectures in scholastic ability investigation 2014

Top 5 ranking		1	2	3	4	5
Japanese A	Primary school	Akita (76.0)	Aomori (75.1)	Ishikawa (74.4)	Fukui (73.8)	Hiroshima (73.8)
	Junior High school	Akita (80.8)	Fukui (79.5)	Toyama (78.1)	Ishikawa (78.1)	Tokyo (77.2)
Japanese B	Primary school	Akita (76.4)	Ishikawa (73.5)	Fukui (72.1)	Toyama (70.1)	Aomori (69.8)
	Junior High school	Akita (70.7)	Fukui (69.8)	Ishikawa (69.1)	Gifu (68.3)	Toyama (68.2)
Math A	Primary school	Akita (81.2)	Ishikawa (80.3)	Fukui (79.2)	Aomori (78.5)	Toyama (78.5)
	Junior High school	Fukui (71.1)	Akita (68.4)	Ishikawa (67.8)	Aichi (67.2)	Toyama/Hyogo (67.1)
Math B	Primary school	Akita (51.5)	Ishikawa (50.4)	Fukui (50.0)	Ehime (47.9)	Tokyo (47.8)
	Junior High school	Fukui (47.7)	Akita (46.9)	Ishikawa (44.9)	Shizuoka (44.6)	Toyama (44.5)
Science	Primary school	Toyama (67.5)	Fukui (66.8)	Akita (66.7)	Ishikawa (66.7)	Aomori (66.3)
	Junior High school	Fukui (61.3)	Akita (59.6)	Toyama (59.2)	Ishikawa (58.2)	Gunma (57)

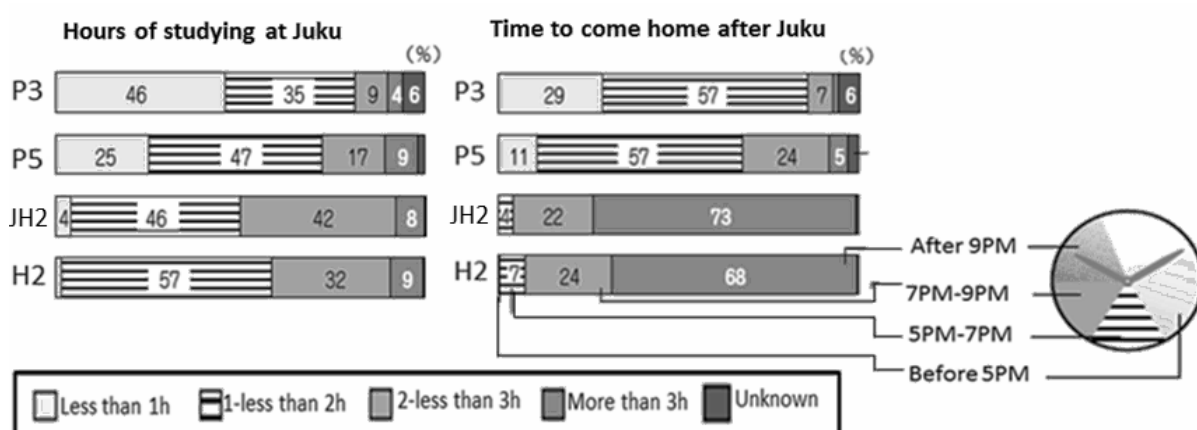
*Colouring in table corresponds to that in Figure 2-5.

Source: <https://www.nier.go.jp/15chousakekkahoukoku/factsheet/prefecture/> (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, 2014)

Figure 2-6 shows the amount of time that children of all school levels spend in relation

to Juku, which is a good indication of its significance in their daily lives. Most children spend one to two hours, once to twice a week and the duration of Juku becomes longer as they grow older. In terms of the time they return home after the Juku session, most primary school students get home between seven and nine in the evening whilst those in secondary school years tend to get home after nine. Hence, this data clearly shows that Juku slowly takes over children's lives in terms of hours dedicated to it and how extensive it can become over the years of schooling.

Figure 2-6 Time spent at Juku and Time taken to travel home after Juku



Note: P: primary school J: Junior high school H: High school

Source: 'Data Clip': Children and Education (Children's Experiential Activity Research Group, 2002; cited in Benesse, 2007)

2.3-3 The development of Juku

Komiyama (2000) identifies six influencing factors for the development of Juku as shown below. These six factors are referred to in relation to the historical development of Juku in the education system offered by Iwase (2006c). According to Iwase, the current form of Juku education started to develop in the 1960s. As for pre-1960s, *Terakoya*, originated in Edo era, was functioning similarly to Juku, teaching general public on top of the schooling (Iwase, 2006c).

Factors influencing the development of Juku

1. Meritocracy
2. Gap between levels of textbooks and entrance examinations
3. Decrease in educational function of local communities and families
4. Increase in disposable income

5. Intensification of entrance examination war

6. Entrance examination system

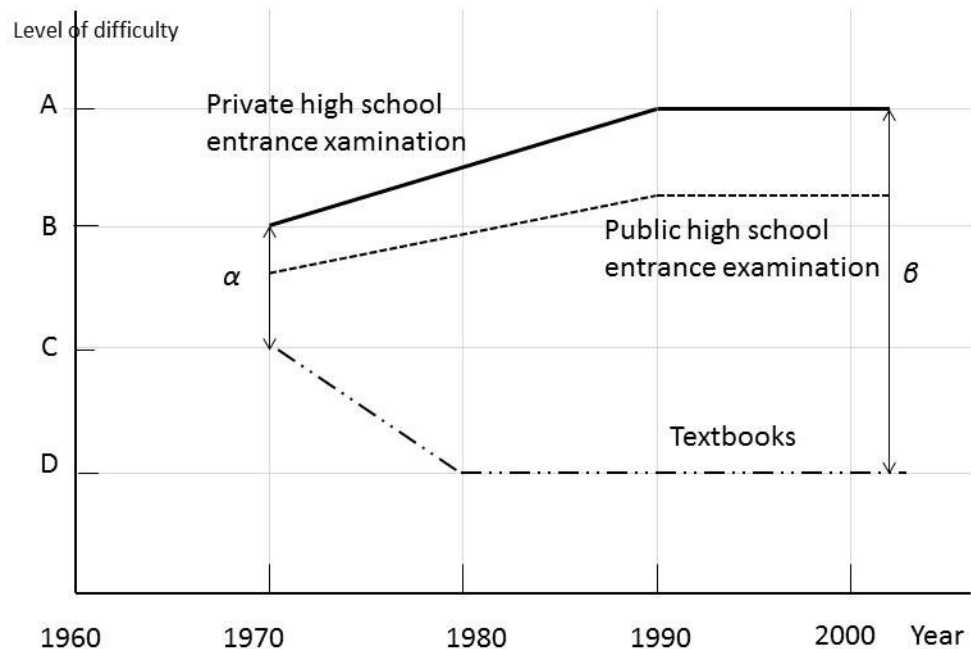
(Komiyama, 2000, p.34)

The first factor of **meritocracy** was discussed above in relation to the Japanese education system. Aside from the above the government previously did not develop social welfare and the insurance system at the state level, which were instead provided through industries. The larger the company is, the better welfare is ensured for the employee, and vice versa for the small one. In this way, not only the level of income but also that of social welfare motivated people to seek higher educational qualifications to enter a large firm (Komiyama, 2000). The popularity of Juku increased in the 1960s, as the baby boomer generation became high school students. Around this time (Figure 2-2), 5 million people, which is double the number of students the decade ago, entered high school, which encouraged the establishment of a grade point average (GPA) system and the advancement of the entrance examination as criteria for high school admission (Komiyama, 2000). Ozaki (1999) describes the 1960s and 1970s as “an era of educational explosion” because of the drastic increase in high school enrolment rates and competitiveness in entrance examinations (Hirooka *et al.*, 2007). This period was when the state began to consider education as an investment that would allow Japan to join in the global economic competition with other industrialised countries (Komiyama, 2000; Hirooka *et al.*, 2007).

In the 1970s, the society started to shift toward high economic growth levels which lasted until the beginning of the 1990s. In the 1970s, there was a major change in school textbooks, which triggered confusion in the education system, as teachers struggled to teach an expanded curriculum (Komiyama, 2000). Eventually, the content and nature of the curriculum decreased afterwards in the 1980s. Thus, the third factor the gap between the level taught out of the textbooks and that required for entrance examinations emerged (see Figure 2-7). That is, while the textbook-set standard fell that of entrance examinations for both public and private high schools increased gradually. The gap widened to such an extent that the family members themselves could no longer help support their children academically, but by employing the services of Juku, their progression could be ensured. Many parents seemed unsatisfied with school teaching, which encouraged reliance on Juku to enhance learning and prepare children for the examinations. The second and third factors are in some ways linked, for as modernisation took place, community ties weakened, and so did the family’s capacity to educate their children themselves. That is, there was a **decrease in the**

educational function of local communities and families. It can be considered that Juku occupies the space between the community and the family, which should be actually taken by schools, and assumes the function that these two institutions have lost over the time.

Figure 2-7 Gap in levels between text books and entrance examinations



Source: (Komiya, 2000, p.51)

Fourth, as the country's economic stability grew, so did **household disposable income**. One of the ways to enjoy spending extra money was to invest in children. In Japan, the governmental spending per student is rather high (USD 10,646) in comparison to the average for OECD countries (USD 9,487) (OECD, 2014a). It should be noted, however, that the Japanese government spends less than 10% of public spending on education, which is below the average of 12.9% in the OECD countries (OECD, 2011, 2014a). In terms of GDP, education shares 2.9% of GDP, while the OECD average is 3.6% (OECD, 2010, 2014a). Those families with substantial amounts of disposable income can enjoy the expense of education as a luxury product, while those with smaller incomes cannot. Additionally, parents' expectations regarding their children increased, and so did the focus on education in society since 1960s (Komiya, 2000). Due to this increased level of attention, parents wanted to avoid the risk of their children facing failure in education and turned to providing extra support, such as Juku. Thus, there was a dramatic increase in the number of national and regional chains of Juku companies, known as the 'era of the flood of Juku' (*Ranjuku Jidai*) in around 1975 (Iwase, 2006c; Ohwaki, 2001; Mainichi Shinbun, 1976).

Following this, in the 1980s, there was an increase in the awareness that there could be more choice in education, in addition to compulsory schooling, which led to the trend for preferring private schooling. This stimulated the third Juku boom. Parents began to believe that private schools provided a better quality of education for their children, and wanted to invest in extracurricular services such as Juku. Around this time, there was also a key development in the business model for Juku provision with an increase in franchises. Under these arrangements, the main franchiser (firm) provided the scheme to the franchisees such as shop owners and people in the community. This change draws on a significant turn in relation to the increase in educational and income variability. After the *Ranjuku Jidai*, the options for running Juku business spread from urban to rural areas, and shifted from teenagers to also include much younger children (Ohwaki, 2001).

Iwase (2006c) explains that Juku education came to be seen as an issue in society from end of the 1980s to beginning of 1990s as after the *Ranjuku Jidai* in the 1970s, Juku attendance was intense. In 1990, the report on *Educational reform corresponding to the New Era* (MEXT, 1991) expressed concerns that the extensiveness of competition in the educational meritocracy, which could be identified from the high rates of Juku attendance, was an illness besetting the education system. The government then investigated the standards of the entrance examinations to see whether it was within the range prescribed in the national curriculum (Iwase, 2006c). From this perspective, Juku was seen as an evil force in the educational system corrupting children's lives. Nevertheless, there was a turn to a positive recognition of Juku by the public in the late 1990s, due to the reformation of the national curriculum. As explored above, the reforms caused controversy with the implementation of the five-day school week and the initiative of 'room to grow (*Yutori*)'. The government had high expectations regarding the *Yutori* curriculum, but instead, it only led to a heated discussion about 'declines in academic ability (*Gakuryoku Teika Ronsou*)' in the public arena. The discussion was the result of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) held by the OECD. In the PISA 2003 and 2006 outcomes, Japan's decline in the ranking from the previous years caused concerns about the *Yutori* curriculum (Maeya, 2006; Aun, 2009).

Around the same time as the implementation of the *Yutori* initiative, the number of parents' complaints to schools increased, and the proportion of difficult cases rose from the middle of the 2000s (Shimazaki, 2008; in Sato, 2008). Observing this trend, Sato (2008)

argues that parents increasingly become to consider school education as a consumable product. This makes parents feel that they are the customers of the public services, always asking for better quality education from the school. Benesse (2012) shows that parents have considerable anxiety about how public school teachers instruct children, and that many believe that private school teachers do better. Overall, parents thought that it would be difficult to provide their children with an education they think is of a good standard, and had to ask for support to services outside the public school or enrol at private schools (Yamada, 2008). It would appear that public concerns in relation to children's academic achievement contributed to the expansion of Juku industry, while at the same time, the industry remained undesirable from the government's perspective.

The fifth factor, the **intensification of the examination war** and the sixth, the **entrance examination system**, relate to meritocracy as explored above. By intensification, Komiyama (2000) refers to the increase in the public consciousness of the examination war. As the society shifted from a community-based one to an individualistic one, it became difficult for people to interact, and this led to the presentation of one's activity in the society by winning the game. Because all schools in Japan are ranked according to their GPA, it is easy to identify the level to which each belongs. Seeing Just as a game, the succession to next level gives the children a thrill, and the true meaning of entrance examination may be forgotten (Komiyama, 2000). The sixth factor relates to this point for the level of entrance examination that the student can pass matters more than the grade he or she obtained from their previous schooling. One may say that there is equal opportunity to take examinations; however, the strategy and knowledge of entrance examinations become more important than actual knowledge taught at school, which accelerates the need for and acceptance of Juku education.

In order to address the above problems, the government issued a report '*Integrated Reforms in High School and University Education and University Entrance Examination Aimed at Realizing a High School and University Articulated System Appropriate for a New Era*' in 2014 in which the form of pedagogy in high school and university education and that of admission system underwent severe criticism (MEXT, 2014f). The report highlights that the current tertiary education system stresses the importance of the memorisation of factual information and students' motivation for studying is derived from passing the entrance examination. In order to overcome these unsatisfactory tendencies, the ministry aims to

reform tertiary education both in the areas of pedagogy and the admission system by 2020. The implementation of this tertiary education policy has just started, but it is welcomed as it ought to steer the motivations driving the entire education system.

2.3-4 Efficacy of Juku for progression

The earlier section above explored the extent of meritocracy alongside human capital investment. However, these discourses merely suggest the assumption that Juku education serves to better social position, but without clear evidence. For this, there have been several studies exploring the efficacy of Juku education.

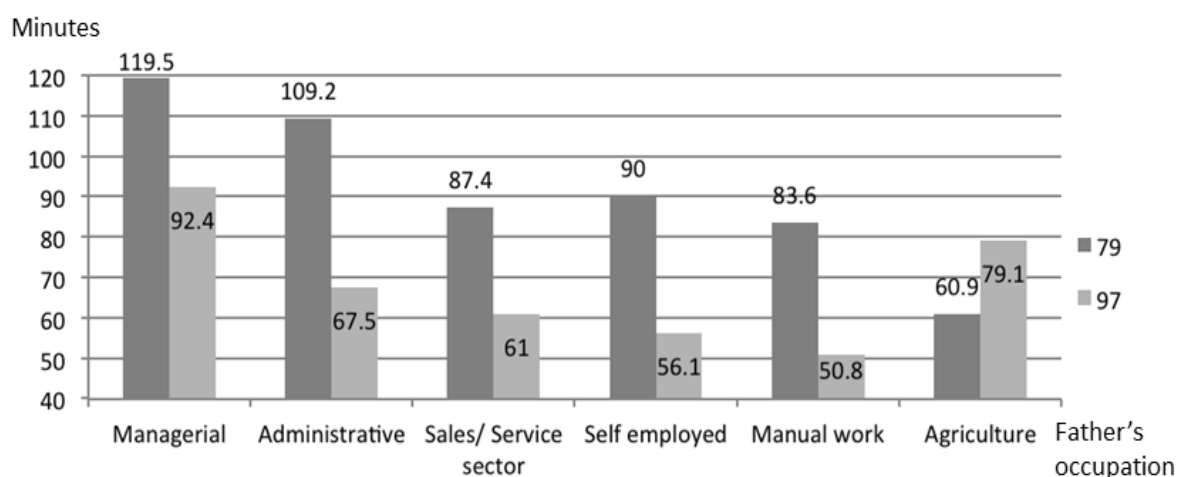
One fundamental study was carried out by Seiyama and Noguchi (1984) three decades ago. The investigation focused on the effect of income inequality on educational investment outside of school and academic ability. They found no relation between the amount of money invested in after-school education and children's success in entering desired high schools. Their success, according to Seiyama and Noguchi, was rather more influenced by the family background. Similarly, Hojo (2010) suggests that schools in fact do not have much effect on children's recorded academic ability, but family background does.

Kataoka (2011) somewhat contradicted the findings of these scholars in his work investigating social stratification and social mobility research (SSM Research) conducted by Japan Sociological Society. Kataoka looked at the data for 1995, which covers people aged between 20 and 69, and compared the academic achievement of the youngest and the oldest age groups. From this study, she concluded that the extracurricular (Juku or tutoring) did influence student success. However, over time, the extent of its impact has diminished because participation in the academic competition became normalised, and so did Juku attendance. For this reason, family background became the most influential factor regarding student academic achievement.

In terms of the significance of family background, Kariya et al. (2008) conducted research on the time spent studying outside school, for example at home and in afterschool activities, in 1979 and 1997. In both rounds, the research was conducted with high school students and considered the difference in time spent studying outside school hours, in relation to father's occupation. The results showed that the amount of study-time varied between different occupational groups (Figure 2-8) and revealed that study-time had decreased overall between the two rounds. Thus, Kariya et al. (*ibid.*) conclude that household occupation has a large

impact on study-time (academic effort).

Figure 2-8 The change in time spent studying outside school hours



(Kariya, 2008, p.80)

2.3-5 Governmental Policies around Juku

The implementation of relevant policy is still in infancy despite the solid base that Juku has in the lives of many children for more than half a century. For instance, there has been just one policy that prohibits public school teachers from work at Juku organisations (Dierkes, 2011). Nevertheless, there has been an increasing awareness worldwide of the need to monitor non-formal education with the introduction of ISO 29990:2010 that set the basic requirement for the providers of such education (International Organization for Standardization, 2010). Following the adoption of this standard, the Japanese government agreed on guidelines for evaluation and disclosure of information regarding private education enterprises (民間教育事業者における評価・情報公開等に係るガイドライン) (MEXT, 2014c). The benefit of private education enterprises is that they can provide users flexibility in their services, but it is difficult to manage their variety in the policy context. The significance of these guidelines are that it recognises students as both learners and consumers, and that there is a need to maintain standards in both aspects. In order to do so, the guidelines firstly attempt to increase transparency in the enterprise, because the clearer the information about the service is, the better consumers can make appropriate choices. Furthermore, while safety of children may not be the foremost concern, the guidelines confirm the need to ensure youngsters' health and safety in and around private education. Thus, there have been a few movements toward regulating the non-formal education services such as Juku, but there still is a serious lack of relevant policies, especially

those incorporating children's voices.

Referring to this lack of policy on Juku, Dierkes (blog entry in 2011) suggests three possible additions to Juku-related policies: a) consumer protection, b) educational standards, or c) health and safety [Sic.]. These suggestions resemble the guidelines above. Even though Juku is an educational service, it is not controlled by the MEXT but rather by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). Thus, Juku organisations need to abide by the regulation targeting businesses, but there is no procedure to monitor their educational standards. The health and safety aspects apply to the length of hours in the classes, and its potential effect on children but for the standard of education in the classroom provided at Juku, there is no set regulation. Some children also travel long distances by public transport or walk home late at night and there is no formal policy covering such situations. For these reasons, the proposed guidelines might be on the right track but it appears they still need to be developed further to ensure that education practices are satisfactory and safe for the service users.

Although not directly referring to Juku education, the 1998 report by the lifelong education council in the MEXT saw the intensity of Juku education as an issue, but at the same time, considered it a beneficial supplementary aid addressing matters that normal schools appear incapable of teaching (MEXT, 1998). This, in turn, is a recognition of the strengths of Juku and there has been a move toward collaboration between Juku and schools. There was a long history of bad relationship between them that government had a *laissez faire* approach to Juku. However, the latest national budget proposal includes a plan to encourage collaboration between public and private education services to lessen the social inequality among children (MEXT, 2014d). There have been several examples from which the central government has attempted to learn about successful collaboration. One of the examples is '*Manabi no 21seiki Juku* (21st century Juku for learning)' in Bungotakada City, which is a publicly run Juku. The *21seiki Juku* began in 2002 when the five-day school week was implemented in order to provide children with various alternative options. The activities take place on Saturdays, and they range across education, sports and computer classes (Maeya, 2006). For another example, the Waseda Academy, which has 29,681 students (March 2014), has been invited to send its teachers to public schools on Saturdays delivering 'Saturday special courses' (Maeya, 2006). Schools' willingness to accept Juku teachers in their system is increasing across the country (Japan Juku Information Centre, 2011). This

trend for cooperation is advancing with Juku corporations founding new schools; for example, the Katayama Gakuin established by the Katayama Juku (anon, 2004). Furthermore, the significance of Juku has been recently recognised by the government, which passed new rules for public assistance in social welfare, allowing recipient families to spend money earned in part-time job or scholarship. This rule was set in “Principles for reducing child poverty” in 2014, and came to enforcement in October 2015 (Cabinet Office, 2014b). Until then, if assistance recipient households spent some money gained through part-time job or scholarship for supplementing education outside school, the amount of welfare assistance was to be reduced, because being able to spend money on such a service meant luxury and financial strength. However, because Juku attendance helps children enhance their academic skills and potential in the labour market, it was considered essential to let families spend money to supplement education. In this way, government hopes to terminate intergenerational poverty.

Maeya (2006) argues that such collaboration, Juku-based schools and assistance for Juku attendance gain attention because there always is a public interest in academic ability that leads to ‘*Goukaku* (success in entrance examination)’. This being said, Takeda (2005) notes that it is important for any sector of education to realise its customers’ needs. The customers include the students, parents, teachers and administrators, and if the institutions ignore their needs, they could easily become isolated. Thus, the collaboration between schools and Juku seems to be accepted as a sign of positive developments throughout the education system overall.

2.3-6 Past research on Juku

Similarly to policy documentation, there are very few academic Juku-related researches. There are, although limited, several quantitative studies on Juku attendance frequency, the fees spent on it, and the effect on children’s motivation for studying. One of the initial investigations of the effects of Juku carried out by Fukaya (1977) qualitatively explores children’s activity spaces in relation to Juku attendance. Despite this research now being dated, it is useful for showing how children negotiate their time use in relation to Juku attendance. According to Fukaya, children manage their time for play and Juku. This is because there is often free time between the finish of the school day and the start of the Juku session. They make use of this time as a long break in order to satisfy their needs, by treating the Juku as ‘second school’ following on after the ‘first school’.

Likewise, Miyashita (1996) reports on the effect of attending Juku for adolescents' identity development by carrying out a survey with university students. The result showed that those who attended Juku enjoyed the experience, and those who started from junior high school level seem to have a robust identity development. Miyashita does, however, suggest a limitation for this outcome in that as the survey used university students, who had apparently succeeded in their entrance examinations, it may be concluded that Juku had served their needs satisfactorily. Additionally, the sample did not include young adolescents, but instead relied on the university students recalling their past experiences. To this extent, this research is useful in seeing how Juku may affect young people's identity but there are caveats in that studies such as these need to have a broader range of participants, and should include young children to probe the effect of Juku in their daily lives.

As for the effect of Juku on motivation for studying, Sayanagi (2009) conducted a survey using primary school children focusing on their level of competence. Similarly, Nozaki and Ishii (2005) explored junior high school students' motivation. Sayanagi (2009) came across a higher level of autonomous motivation to study for those who attended Juku than those who did not. Nozaki and Ishii found that junior high school children studied more to fulfil their feeling of accomplishment in the competitive academic environment. Both reports suggest that Juku attendance does not diminish the students' level of motivation for studying, but rather maintains it. Thus, contrary to the public concern over negative effect of extensive activity over children's lives, Juku seems to sustain the children's lives.

Furthermore, Kimura's (2004) study suggests there is a gender difference in the perceptions of Juku. Kimura conducted a survey with high school students attending Yobiko,⁴ and investigated the gender difference pertaining to perceptions # attendance. For both genders, it was apparent that school is a place to develop basic academic skills, while the Yobiko's purpose is to provide entrance examination practice and to supply additional education. According to Kimura (*ibid.*), Yobiko seems to have more functional meaning for males than females. Lower score for seeing 'Yobiko as a place where adolescents have to attend' scored for men suggests that they would attend Yobiko only if there is a high level of a need to do so. Conversely, women seem to value Yobiko's function as a facilitator to

⁴ Yobiko is focused at high school students or high school graduates, specialising in preparing them for entrance examination for universities. Juku for primary and junior high school students is not called Yobiko.

fulfil their interest in specific subjects. Both genders certainly see a benefit in attending Yobiko for the preparation for entrance examinations. However, the extent to which females seek fulfilment of their interest in certain subjects explains their pursuit of synthetic academic achievement, combining basic knowledge and advanced skill trainings for entrance examination success. Thus, there seems to be a clear gender difference in positioning the meaning of extra-curricular study. Education in relation to gender is further discussed in the later section.

Most Juku-related research to date has been quantitative and there is a lack of qualitative investigations. One of the few ethnographic explorations of children's experience of preparing for entrance examination by attending Juku was carried out by Iwase (2010). The children's experience is examined in relation to how they develop their 'selves' as preparatory students to the entrance examination (*Jukensei*), and their perceptions about the Juku life. To the extent that this research did involve children in the process, as well as asking them how they see Juku attendance, it is highly valuable.

2.3-7 Summary: Juku attendance

Juku has increasingly become common activity for children, due to several issues that have emerged in the education system. From previous studies on Juku, it has become apparent that the most influential factor for children's success in academic achievement and social status is family background on the basis that Juku attendance is normalised activity for children. In this respect, Juku attendance may heighten a child's academic ability, but family background may influence it further in the meritocratic schooling competition. Additionally, a crucial question needs to be answered as to why there is a serious lack of Juku-related policy, despite its extensiveness in Japan and it being attacked in policy documents. The proportion of Juku attendance keeps increasing even in times of shrinking child population, and there is a need for clarifying the significance of Juku's existence for children. Though the exploration of Juku attendance remains at its infancy, this section clarified that Juku is predominantly associated with future investment for children's success.

2.4 After-school hours and Out-of-school activities (OSA)

From above sections, it may seem as if Juku is the only alternative for children to spend time aside from home in after school time, but the pattern of time spending varies as much as the number of children. There are also other activities different from Juku, such as home

tutoring, a correspondence course, and children's individual study. Aside from studying, they can stay with friends and families, doing out-of-school activities (OSA) such as art and sports, and spend time at community after-school centre.

Here, it is worth noting some gender differences in kinds of activities children participate, as the present study focuses on girls' life experiences. A survey conducted by Benesse (2009) shows that there is a difference in the kinds of out-of-school activities (OSA) that girls and boys tend to take part in though the spending for scholastic activity are similar between them. In this report, Sato (2009) highlights that girls tend to take part in artistic activities in their after-school time such as playing instruments (particularly the piano) and ballet. Many parents claim they would respect what their children want to do but consider that art is more essential for girls than for boys, and boys should be engaged in academic and sporting activities.

With regards to the popularity of learning the piano, in her work, Mizuno (2001) revealed that girls' engagement in learning the piano can be considered under four headings: economic status, educational achievement, as well as gender and the matter of human capital. The first, the economic aspect, refers to income in that being able to play the piano is taken to signify affluence and belonging to a prosperous family. In terms of education, learning to play the piano is a symbol showing family commitment to fostering good pedagogy in children, for playing the piano requires considerable hard work and perseverance. The gender dimension relates to a deeply embedded notion of educating a well-mannered woman. In many Western cultures, bourgeois families may want their girls to grow up to be accomplished ladies, and a similar notion has been adopted in Japan. Finally, in relation to the above factors, the ability to play the piano may be a powerful indicator of a positive family dynamic, suggesting that their relationships function effectively to foster all the family members' level of human capital.

Regarding the overall after-school period, in 2007, the Japanese government adopted the *Afterschool Children Plan* (放課後子どもプラン), in order to assure the safety of children and provide space for play and activities in the local community. It was administered by two ministries, MEXT and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). MEXT is in charge of the *Afterschool Children's Class Project*, while MHLW undertakes the *Afterschool Child Healthy Rearing Project*. As can be seen from project names, MEXT focuses on encouraging academic and sports activity, while MHLW offers child care. The

activities related to the projects take place in public school classrooms or local community centre. The entire plan was renewed in 2014 as the '*After-school Comprehensive Plan for Children* (放課後子ども総合プラン)', consisting of '*After-school Children's Classes* (放課後子ども教室)' run by MEXT and '*After-school Adolescent's Club* (放課後児童クラブ)' run by the MHLW (MEXT and MHLW, 2014). The aim of the plan is to provide a childcare infrastructure (*Ibasho*: a place to be) through which women would be able to participate in the labour market by providing children places to be taken care of in order to achieve the '*Society where women can shine* (女性が輝く社会)'. The main concern was that although it still needs improvement in enrolment rate, pre-school children have places to be taken care of. However, once they are in primary schools, there has been a lack of care for children of double-income family especially in after-school hours.

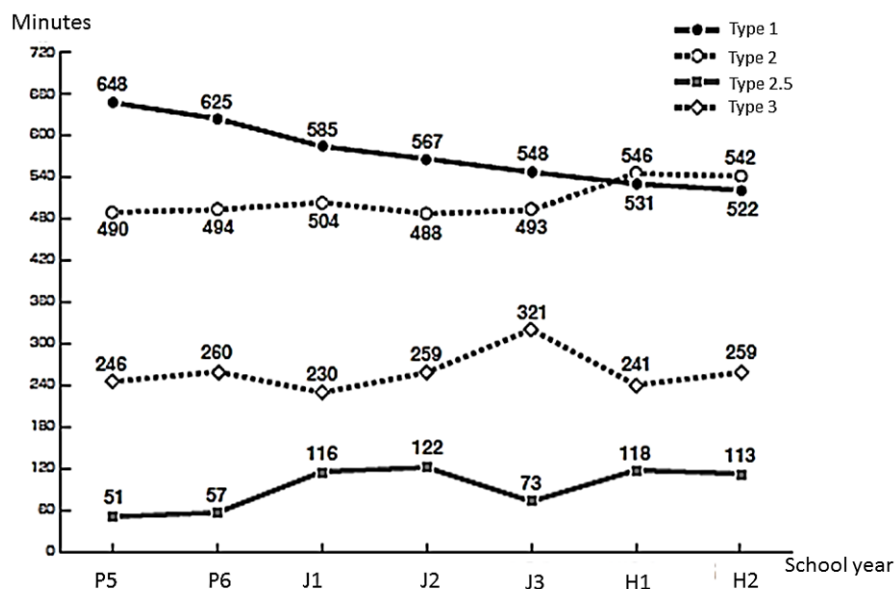
There appears to be a common factor to be considered regarding how children spend their after-school hours: space and time. Tsuruyama et al. (2008) explored the nature of primary school children's play and collected data on their activities both in and outside school. They reported that in the after-school period, 27.8% of children are engaged in extracurricular or a range of activities including Juku, and 14.3% pass their time studying. Some other activities involve playing games, watching television, or reading books, which are not physical activities and can be carried out alone. They are also engaged in more physical play at school, such as rope skipping, ball catching and tag. The form of physical play varies depending on the space and time available.

Similarly, Benesse's (2009) survey on children's after-school spaces shows a variety between school levels, region and gender. The most popular spaces used by primary school students are the 'home', 'friend's house', and 'park or square'. Those from the urban areas had particular characteristics in spending time in more public spaces such as school classrooms and public facilities than rural children. When they enter junior high schools, the space expands to include shops in the neighbourhood, bookstores, game centres and karaoke shops, with some gender differences: boys tend to play in domestic areas such as the home, while girls go out to public spaces. Kimura's (2008) study on children's after-school time use also shows differences according to age. Kimura separated three kinds of time use as follows: type 1 covers requirements for human survival such as sleeping and eating; type 2 usage refers to activities children undertake as social actors such as schooling and work; and type 3 use applies to activities which people chose to do. In between the latter two types lies

type 2.5 time usage which denotes something that individuals can choose to do, but involves a certain level of restriction, such as Juku, school clubs attendance and OSA. The four types of time use have been mapped out by Kimura (*ibid.*) and below in Figure 2-9 the average time usage per day for students between the 5th grade of primary school (P5) and 2nd grade of high school (H2). The type 1 decreases as the school grade ascends, while type 2 slightly increases. Additionally, type 2.5 time use is clearly in inverse proportion to that of type 3. From this data, thus, it can be observed that children do have time to do non-demanding things (type 3), but the extra activities (type 2.5) gradually influence it.

This section briefly explored out-of-school activities, and indicated that there is a tendency for girls to learn playing the piano. In addition, it became apparent that the kind of activities that children engage with change throughout childhood, and Juku attendance increasingly affects OSA attendance. With this in mind, the next section explores the association between gender and education.

Figure 2-9 Children's time-use



Note: P: Primary school J: Junior high school H: High school

Source : (Kimura, 2008)

2.5 Gender and Education

Gender is a serious concern in educational discussions, because it is associated with a person's future employment status. Juku helps Japanese students to aspire in adulthood. However, there can be an unfortunate drawback waiting for women in adulthood: a choice

between work and family life (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-b). This section explores some gender concerns that persist in contemporary Japanese society, and how policies are trying to handle the relevant issues.

2.5-1 Education as a processor of gender socialisation

Education takes a major part of reproducing gender identities among other factors (Dillabough, 2002). In the sociology of education, Bernstein theorised the effect of pedagogies and curriculum on pupil knowledge and identity formation: codes theory (Bernstein, 1978; Dillabough, 2002). It considers knowledge is formed through social pedagogy, which is related to the reproduction of social classes (Sadovnik, 2001). Thus, this theory demonstrated that school practice is linked to the larger context in which it is sited.

The gender role reproduction through education is related to the social stratification, where women are subordinated through gender inequalities (Dillabough, 2002). Gender equality has been a goal for many international and national institutions, and various policies have accordingly been set up during the last two decades. A recent OECD publication suggests that gender inequality persists in three areas: education, employment and entrepreneurship (the ‘three Es’) (OECD, 2012, p.3). However, Kanbur (2002) points out that gender inequality is often not considered as ‘large’ as socio-economic inequality. This is due to the narrow evidence that is currently available. At any rate, education and employment are significant arenas where gender inequality is discussed. Jacobs (1996) discusses that gender differences have a considerable influence and explored it in three contexts: 1) access to higher education, 2) college experiences, and 3) post-collegiate outcomes (Jacobs, 1996, p.154). These points are useful as they display pre-, present- and post- education outcomes and are applicable not only to higher education but also to the earlier stages of education. In this case, the three points can be re-worded into 1) access to education, 2) school experience, and 3) post education outcomes.

2.5-2 Gender policies

Regarding the above, gender inequality has been a focus in the global policy arena. One of the most significant activities regarding this has been the United Nation’s World Conferences on Women. Four conferences have been held since 1975, with the final one held in Beijing (UN Women, anon). The conference consolidated the *Beijing Platform for Action*, which reviewed twelve critical points and proposed recommendations (UN Women,

anon). These cover a variety of fields that are crucial in improving women's lives, such as addressing poverty, education and training and violence (UN Women, anon). Aside from the United Nations, other international organisations, such as the OECD raise concerns about gender issues, recommend policies and implement action plans.

Following the international trajectory, the Japanese government has been gradually implementing gender-related policies. For example, *the National Plan of Action* was arranged in 1977, corresponding to the United Nations' *the World Plan of Action* (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-c). The Basic Act for Gender-Equal Society (男女共同参画基本法) (Act No. 78 of 1999) was enacted in 1999 to reform social conditions in which women were subordinated. The preamble of the Act stated that "[...] it is vital to position the realisation of a Gender-Equal Society as a top-priority task in determining the framework of 21st-century Japan" (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-c). Thus, it was treated as one of the foremost important policies. Five principles addressed in the Act are:

- 1) Respecting human rights of both men and women,
- 2) Reconsideration of social systems and tradition,
- 3) Promotion and implementation of policies and joint participation for decided action,
- 4) Consistency in both household work and other activities, and
- 5) International cooperation (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-d).

In addition to these, the Bureau proposes three areas of social activities to be improved, such as energising workplaces, enriching family life, and enhancing the community's potential (*Chiikiryoku*: 地域力) (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-c).

The first goal, 'energising the workplace', promotes women's participation in the labour market as well as in decision-making processes. This requires diversity of and flexibility in working patterns so that both men and women can work to their full potential. When this is achieved, it is expected that labour force productivity is greatly improved. Second, the 'enrichment of family life' aims to increase men's participation in domestic work. Due to the gradual increase in women's participation in the labour market and the legacy of strong expectations regarding gendered roles, women are forced to choose between them having a career and family duties. Japan is facing severe stagnation in the fertility rate, which is making it an aged society. This situation requires men's contribution in domestic matters to support women having a life in both the labour market and family spheres. In other words, WLB is also a strategy to regulate the population and the demography. Finally, the goal of

‘enriching regional potential’ attempts to strengthen ties in the local community. This could be done by encouraging individuals to participate in local activities for it is assumed that strong community relationships make for an environment in which children can lead healthy lives. From these, it can be seen that gender policy seeks to achieve these governmental goals by encouraging individuals’ active participation in society by offering different approaches and strategies.

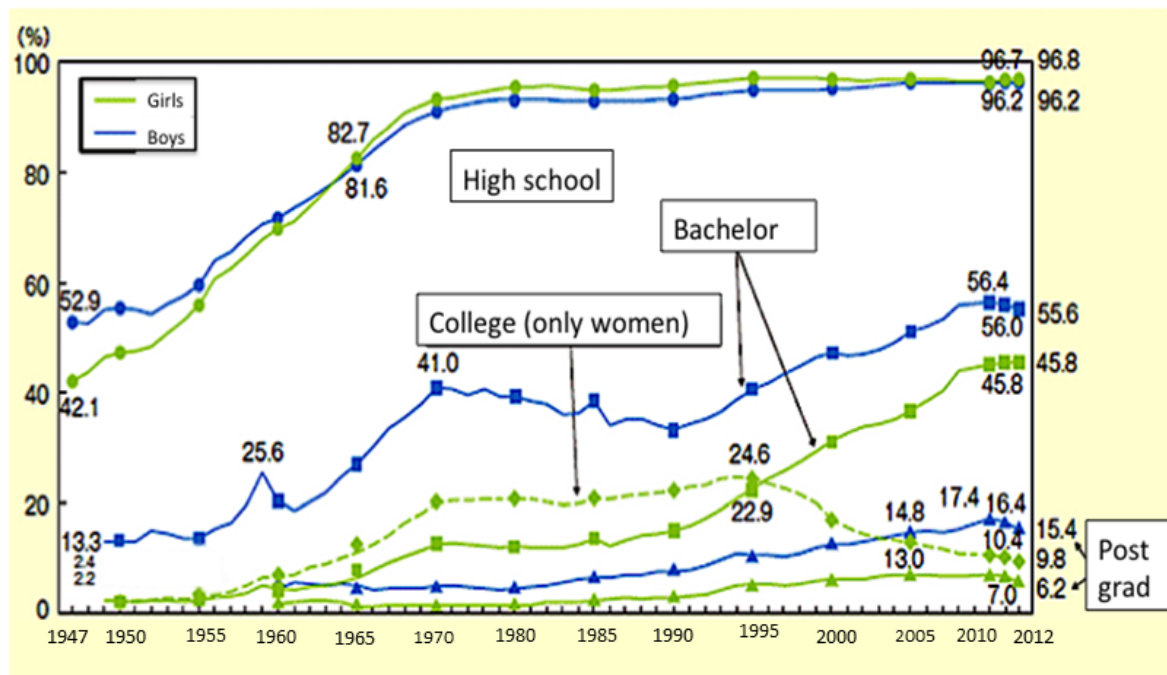
2.5-3 Women’s participation in Employment and Education

The areas in which women’s participation can be improved are employment and education. This section explores the circumstances in which women are situated in relation to these two fields.

Japan has long been a patriarchal society, and women have had struggles in maintaining work and family commitments at the same time. This contributed to the decrease in the fertility rate, and accordingly the proportion of the population comprising the younger generation has been shrinking (Cabinet Office, 2011a). In order to solve this issue, the *Work-Life Balance Charter* and *Work-Life Balance Principle* (Gender Equality Bureau, 2007) were implemented to encourage people to change cultural norms, such as working long hours. To this extent, Work-Life Balance (WLB) policy does not consider only work conditions but also draws together gender inequality and fertility issues. One of the WLB policies aims to achieve a robust social structure in which women can freely make career and personal choices about when to have children. Furthermore, each gender still tends to choose different kinds of occupation; for example, men tend to be in more managerial position (1,36million) in contrast to women (0.17million) in 2012 (Gender Equality Bureau, 2013b). In order to see why such trend is persistent, there is a need to look at aspects of education and career choices in women’s lives.

In terms of education, the general school enrolment rate is, in fact, almost equal between girls and boys until the high school level (Figure 2-10). However, there is a clear gap at undergraduate level, resulting in about a 10% gender difference. At the postgraduate level, this widens even further, with more than double the proportion of men (15.4%) attending graduate school in comparison to women (6.2%) (Gender Equality Bureau, 2013b).

Figure 2-10 Trend in educational enrolment rate in Japan



(Gender Equality Bureau, 2013b)

In addition to the enrolment rate, there also is a persistent difference in the choices of subjects studied in higher education. The most popular area of study for women has been humanities, resulting in female students accounting for 65% of the total. On the other hand, women's share of science and engineering subjects is only about 12% of the total number of students in this area of study (Gender Equality Bureau, 2013b). This difference also results in the gender imbalance in the kinds of industry in which people choose to work. In order to overturn this situation, the Gender Equality Bureau has been promoting science subjects for female junior high- and high-school students. Furthermore, to support this, the Cabinet Office has set up an information website for girls in the relevant age groups (Gender Equality Bureau, 2005).

From the policies, it can be seen that the gender equality strategy in education focuses on the higher education, especially for scientific subjects. However, Hanami (2011) argues that the most important aspect is the education experienced prior to the tertiary level. This is because students choose a subject in higher education based on their experiences and ideas gained earlier in life. The consideration of gender equality is included in citizenship classes, or in integrated study (*Sougo Gakushu*) in secondary education. The policy also suggests schools should provide home economics classes for both genders, as it was only for girls previously), in order to gain more up to date views of family life (Gender Equality Bureau,

anon-a). Nevertheless, it does not necessarily mean that students consider gender equality thoroughly (Hanami, 2011). That is, there is a much more fundamental factor that affects students' gendered ideology that might also have an impact on their subject decisions in tertiary education: the hidden curriculum in school culture and the family context.

Kimura (2009b) explores the internalisation of a female identity in school and social class cultures. The school system largely maintains the gender equality principle in two ways. One is that both genders have equal access to enter school and second, the curriculum is the same for both genders. To this extent, girls and boys essentially have equality in the school system but a hidden curriculum prevails in this supposedly gender equal setting. Hidden curriculum is a view that is perceived by students regardless of the school's intention; students do not feel they are forced to accept it in the everyday processes of the school but it is, in a covert way, always impacting upon them (Tada, 2011; Amano, 2009). Amano (2009) points out that one hidden feature is the gendered division in teachers' work: there tend to be male teachers for scientific subjects, and female teachers for the humanities. Looking at teachers as role models for adulthood, students learn what subject field of work might be appropriate to each gender. Kimura (2009b) also highlights the content of textbooks as an influential factor as the characters that appear in them tend to have traditional paternalistic roles, especially within old books. In these ways, girls in particular are exposed to two kinds of messages: one that supports and promotes gender equality and the other that reinforces traditional gendered ideas.

Tatano and Wakabayashi (2006) conducted questionnaires with school students regarding their perception of gendered roles and expectations, as well as family members' roles. The results indicate that boys tend to follow gendered ideas more strongly than girls and it was apparent that primary school-aged children tend to have stronger views in support of traditional gendered roles than those in junior high school. Thus, they conclude that children have these ideas from an early age rather than acquire them over time. It was first hypothesised that this was due to a difference in how teachers treat children, which may lead to their gendered views but the result indicated that children themselves stress gender roles. From these outcomes, it was considered that not only the school environment but also that of the home affects the children's gendered perception. Thus, Tatano and Wakabayashi conclude school and home should collaborate to work together in promoting more gender equal settings.

It can be considered that the children's views on adulthood and gendered roles originating in home and school settings may affect future career choices. Manabe (2007) asked children in fourth and sixth grades in primary school and second grade in junior high school (8th grade) about their views on the future jobs they wished to have. It was revealed that there is a clear gender divide in the desired jobs for fourth graders while on the other hand, eighth graders' desires were divided. Manabe (*ibid.*) posits that this may be because children gain more appropriate information about occupations over time and forget their gendered ideas. She also explored children's future desires in relation to their evaluation of self. Both girls and boys tend to choose occupations that are attached with traditional gendered roles when their evaluation of their own educational achievement is low but if they feel that they have considerable academic skill then there is a smaller degree of gender divide regarding their career intentions. Thus, it is not merely a matter of the school culture that may affect the gender beliefs but it is also the level of educational achievement.

Nagano (2008) ran a panel survey for high school students and young adults, and concluded that essentially no gender-oriented perspective on work could be found. However, women who did not go on to attend four-year universities by either being in college or in jobs, tend to have gendered idea about work, thinking that they should not continue working after marriage or child birth. Kimura (2009a), Tsutsumi (2012) and Ueno's (2012) works also confirm that young people in universities and highly ranked high schools tend not to have a gendered perspective of labour. Furthermore, Nagano's analysis suggests that mothers acted as role models and this affects children's desires regarding work roles in the future. An adult female child of a full-time working mother seeks to continue working even following marriage and/or child birth but a daughter of a housewife mother is reluctant to continue working after these life events. This study, therefore, confirms the considerable effect of educational attainment and mothers' occupation on gendered ideology.

This section explored the relationship between gender, educational attainment and career choices. The association appears straightforward to understand; however, Honda (2009) discusses that a significance of education for occupation is now lost in Japan. The education system has tried to treat students as equally as possible. Thus, specific skill that can be applicable in the job market was not taught in education. Instead, companies provide the on-the-job training (OJT), and transform employees appropriate for each work role. As the education system is built with the presupposition that graduates will get suitable training in

the work environment, not much is done even in the higher education. Consequently, it needs to be considered at which stage gender idea may affect an individual's decision on career, and with what cause.

The effect of educational attainment on gender roles as explored by Manabe (2007) and Ueno (2012) can also be considered in relation to after-school learning activities, namely Juku. As Juku is not mandatory, it can be considered that parents and children decide on attendance in order to meet certain pre-determined purposes that they deem important. Benesse (2013) conducted surveys to mothers of children aged three to eighteen years to find out what kind of activities their children participated in. Table 2-3s shows the popular activities for children with proportionately more boys attending Juku for entrance examination purposes than girls. The girls tend to take part in cultural activities, such as studying English conversation and calligraphy. Thus, it seems parents tend to invest in boys than girls for academic education purposes which may be prompted by traditional views held with respect to gendered expectations of girls' futures.

Table 2-3 Out-of-school activities for children

	Boy	Girl
Juku (for preparation for entrance exam)	12.8 ①	11.2 ②
English Conversation	10.5 ②	11.8 ①
Calligraphy	5.2 ④	9.6 ③
Juku (Supplementary)	6.2 ③	6.1 ④

Note: Numbers in circles show the order of more enrolled activities.
(Institute, 2013)

In relation to this, Kataoka (2001) analysed the social stratification and social mobility (SSM) data, in order to see the association between investment in after-school activity and educational achievement. From this, Kataoka found that investment in such activity is effective for boys, but girls did not improve their academic achievement. Instead, the effective factor regarding girls' educational achievement was pursuing cultural activities, such as music and arts. Kita (2006) confirms this finding and claims that the gender gap in education does not necessarily stem from attendance at purely academic activities such as Juku, but also from participating in other non-academic activities.

2.5-4 Gender context summary

‘Gender’ is socially constructed through the socialisation and education of children. In education, there are differences between genders in pre-, present- and post-educational experience (Dillabough, 2002). These differences can lead to gender gaps in employment afterwards, such as in wages and occupational positions. Some existing literature suggests that this gender-related choice stem from experiences at home and school (Bernstein, 1978; Dillabough, 2002). Additionally, after-school experience must not be neglected and some researchers claim that various types of activities affect in different ways the educational achievement of girls and boys and this does not necessarily only pertain to academic activities (Juku).

2.6 Chapter summary

This chapter explored the development of the Japanese education system, examination system, meritocracy, Juku’s responding development to them and gender context. In the course of education history, there were five significant shifts: a) Westernisation under Meiji Restoration, b) radical empiricism with Imperial Rescript, c) democratisation after the Second World War, d) transition to neoliberalism, and e) *Ikiru Chikara* and *Yutori* under 2002 reform of school curriculum. In response to the core education system, Juku has been seen differently by both the state and the public. The major argument that entails Juku is the extent of meritocracy, discussed both internationally and domestically in Japan. Past research suggests Juku does not have a particularly bad effect on children’s lives and academic achievement, but it remained unfavourable for the state: there is a tension between how the state sees education and what the public is seeking from education. The gender context was highlighted as there is a possible tension awaiting girls in the future. In the current Japanese society, the gender issue persists in relation to, for example, occupational positions and wages. It appeared that though the clear difference appears more significantly in the adulthood, some small gender gaps already exist from the childhood. Thus, childhood remains an important period of human being to be considered. In relation to the contextual exploration in the present chapter, the following chapter looks into the development of theories of childhood.

Chapter 3 Theories of childhood

3.0 Introduction

This thesis aims to see children's experiences of Juku and their overall lives through their voices and perspectives. Children's voices are conventionally neglected due to them being considered as not yet full human-beings. Addressing this, recent decades have seen the emergence of a new sociology of childhood recognising them as social agents with their own rights and introducing a child-centred approach in exploring their experiences. In this context, it is essential to acknowledge that children have been institutionalised in society with a chronological age perspective; for instance, children enter schooling at the age of six and graduate from high school when they are eighteen years old. Consideration of these aspects corresponds to the main question of this thesis and sub-questions 1, 2 and 3. Furthermore, there has been increasing attention on how time and space are experienced by children, in contrast to typical considerations of linear time frames and geographical spaces. This chapter thus first explores the changing landscape of the study of childhood by highlighting the significance of the child-centred approach in valuing children's voices in section 3.1. Section 3.2 looks into the diversity and characteristics of children's experiences in time and space. Subsequently to these two sections, section 3.3 seeks to theorise childhood in the Japanese context.

In this research, I first intended to apply already established theories to explore the research topic. For example, the work of James and Prout (1998) appeared particularly useful for considering the sociology of childhood and the work of Ben-Arieh and Frones (2007) for considering childhood well-being. However, analysis of the research context and the empirical data showed that these established theories were not sufficient to explore the research topic. This is because Japanese society and childhood in Japan are quite distinct from the Western context within which James and Prout (1998) and Ben-Arieh and Frones (2007) formulated their theories. For this reason, it became necessary to draw on a different range of emerging theories such as those by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) which I found better suited to the Japanese context. Consequently, chapters 3 and 4 present these emerging concepts and theories that appeared to better capture and explore the research topic.

3.1 Changing prospect of childhood study: Recognising children and their voices

In the history of childhood, there is variation in how children have been seen in societal contexts (Aries, 1962; Corsaro, 2011). Until two decades ago, it was natural to see children

as those who require training by adults to be socialised as ‘fully functioning members’ of society (James *et al.*, 1998; Corsaro, 2011, p.9). This section explores a departure from this past conceptualisation to a new sociology of childhood, as well as considering childhood in the Japanese context and more recent developments in theorising childhood.

3.1-1 Conventional modes of childhood: investment in the future becoming

As briefly stated above, children have been considered as not fully developed human-beings but as human-becomings who need to learn and internalise social restraints (James *et al.*, 1998; Qvortrup, 2005). When children are seen as human-becomings, there are two key concepts to be considered: socialisation and social investment (Parsons, 1951; 1956; Lister, 2003).

In terms of socialisation, Ritchie and Kollar (1964, p.24; cited in Jenks, 1996), summarise the sociological perspective of looking at children as human-becomings:

The central concept in the sociological approach to childhood is socialisation. [...] This term implies that children acquire the culture of the human groupings in which they find themselves. Children are not to be viewed as individuals fully equipped to participate in a complex adult world, but as beings who have the potential for being slowly brought into contact with human beings.

The socialisation perspective is similar to psychological approaches to child development, in which children are expected to develop in stages (Hart, 1992; Parsons, 1956). Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecology model is significant and widely utilised in considering child development. For Bronfenbrenner (*ibid.*, p.3), human development signifies ‘lasting change in the way in which a person perceives and deals with his environment’. Bronfenbrenner does not necessarily assign the notion of ‘development’ only to children but to all human beings. Nevertheless, he uses children as an example as they face greater development ahead, and because of simplicity in terms of the limited range of factors affecting them compared to adults. In the ecology model, a child, or developing person, is situated at the centre of a microsystem, where she is directly contained in a field such as the home. Her position increasingly becomes extended to the macrosystem, such as the nation to which she belongs. This framework captures how children make and expand interactions in society. By exploring the different levels of the system, Bronfenbrenner (1979, p.27) expounds that human development is about how a person acquires a sense of the context surrounding her, and becomes actively engaged in restructuring the situated environment. In other words, development involves a person making sense of the extended environment,

rather than merely recognising the immediate situation in which she is involved.

Socialisation is closely associated with education, where the former is linked with physical and psychological development and the latter with institutionalisation and scholarisation in the societal setting (Durkheim, 1956, 1961; cited in Jenks, 1992; Bernstein, 1971a, b). Bernstein (1971a, b) considered socialisation in relation to children's ability to have speech in that they slowly gain cognitive ability within a certain cultural context, which is actualised through relationships with four influential actors: 'the family, the peer group, school and work' (Bernstein, 1971a, p.174). Regarding education, Durkheim (1956) saw children as 'empty vessels' who are to be filled (educated) with society's regulations as agents (Meighan and Harber, 2011). Education can be seen as a policy approach to social investment by the state, and this is explored below using the British context as an example.

Social investment by the state refers to a policy approach that aims to anticipate and prepare for social risks such as educational inequality and unemployment, rather than repairing them afterwards (Morel *et al.*, 2012; Smith, 2015). Preparation can take place by equipping citizens with a provision of skills and knowledge that might serve the state's economic needs in the future (Giddens, 1998, p.117; Esping-Andersen *et al.*, 2002). In the UK, the notion of social investment gained popularity along with that of human capital when New Labour came into power in 1997 and lasted until 2010 (Lister, 2003). The preceding Chapter 2 (see section 2.2-2) briefly referred to the notion of human capital, which mainly concerns a person's capacities in relation to the economy. New Labour's policy is worthwhile as it paid significant attention to children but tended to focus on their future prosperity so that Lister (*ibid.*) criticises this approach for failing to recognise children's present lives. New Labour's agenda claimed that 'lifelong access to education and training' (Lister, 2003, p.430) was an essential part of social investment in the 'human capital' of children as 'citizen-workers-in-becoming', and that it can also enhance social capital (Jenson and Saint-Martin, 2001, Table 2; in Lister, 2003, p.433; Brown, 1999). Social capital facilitates social actors' actions and is necessary for increasing human capital (Coleman, 1988). The New Labour government considered social capital an essential aspect for attempting to establish an infrastructure for investing in human capital, and they aimed to focus on the future lives of children (Commission on Social Justice, 1994, p.306-3-8; Lister, 2003). Polakow (1993, p.101) and Prout (2000, p.305) argue that when the existence of children becomes conditional with their future citizenship rights, governments tend to invest

in policies that are not concerned with the well-being of children's present lives. In such an environment, education can be treated merely as an instrument to achieve good results in a competitive society, rather than in terms of learning enjoyment (Lister, 2003; Kelley, 2004).

Following the above, it can be considered that Juku is an ultimate form of human capital investment. As was explored in Chapter 2, Juku attendance involves consuming additional education in the hope of gaining future success. The admission Juku particularly focuses on children's successful entrance to privileged schools in the future. Supplementary Juku may put less emphasis on future success, as their aim is to improve current academic performance at school, but achievement in this regard can consequently lead to a successful future after all. This future orientation may effectively jeopardise children's present, because it may entail significant pressure to achieve in future at the cost of a child's present childhood. The next section introduces an approach that sheds more light on apparently neglected childhood experiences in present time: the new sociology of childhood.

3.1-2 New sociology of childhood

By criticising conventional approaches that see children as *human-becomings*, a new sociology of childhood has emerged, arguing the importance of recognising children as *human-beings*. Through this lens, children are seen as active agents who internalise meanings in their environment and construct their own understandings of the world (Corsaro, 2011). The development of this approach can be seen in line with the adoption of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which was introduced in 1989 as the 'first legally binding international instrument' promoting and protecting a range of children's rights (United Nations, 1989). This convention defines children as those under the age of eighteen years old and addresses the need to provide special protection and extra care for them. Reynaert et al.'s (2009, 2010) analysis of the UNCRC suggests that it promotes the idea of childhood having self-direction, in contrast to dependency, with so-called '3Ps': 'provision, protection and participation' (Reynaert *et al.*, 2009, p.521). Provision refers to children's rights to have their basic needs fulfilled. Secondly, children have a right to be protected from harmful practices, and finally their right to participation promotes the idea that their decisions about their own lives should be heard (Hammarberg, 1990, p.100). These 3Ps challenge the rights that parents hold over children, implying that children can now negotiate their autonomy and competency with parents.

Several scholars have conceptualised the importance of seeing children as human beings by adopting a child-centred perspective. James and Prout (1997b) suggest that children's voices were initially silenced rather than non-existent, and recent studies have tried to raise the volume of children's voices in their own right (Hardman, 1973). This silencing was due to children being ignored on the grounds of their chronological age. They are considered as not being capable of functioning fully as human beings simply because of their age. A clear example of this is applying a voting age in election systems (Lee, 2001). In this movement to focus on childhood in present time, Qvortrup (1994) conceptualises 'childhoods' rather than 'childhood', in order to recognise the diverse forms it takes, depending on the conditions in which children live. While the shift in attempting to see children as human-beings is noteworthy, James and Prout (1997b) add a caveat that solely focusing on children is challenging because childhood always entails relationships with others, especially with parents, which leads to a generational approach to understanding childhood (Mayall, 2002; 2003; Alanen, 2003).

A number of scholars, led by Mayall (2002), have explored childhood as a generational term, based on Karl Mannheim's (1952 [1928]; in Mayall and Zeiher, 2003) work on the sociology of knowledge. Mannheim (1952 [1928]) sought to understand the formation of similar knowledge shared by people born around same time, and how this leads to the construction of coherent social groups. The exploration of childhood and other generations allows scholars to understand the creation and development of knowledge based on interrelationships within and across other generations (adulthood), rather than chronological age (Alanen, 2003). Nevertheless, chronological age remains an associated factor when considering childhood in so far as children are institutionalised in social settings, such as school.

Children's agency

The increasing notion of 'seeing children with their own rights' can be, in one way, interpreted as ensuring their autonomy and agency. The Western context considers that an autonomous person is an agent who makes decisions on his/her life course and is able to make an assumption of their values and cost (Oshana, 2006). Much of the child research literature argues for the need to see children as research subjects who are competent to participate in research processes (Christensen and Prout, 2002). To this extent, children can

be considered as no different from adults; however, they are also seen as vulnerable beings requiring security and support from adults. Hence, the notion of child autonomy is contested.

When considering autonomy, there are broadly two ways to approach this concept: autonomy as separation and as agency (Beyers *et al.*, 2003). ‘Separation’ refers to psychoanalytic consideration of independence from parents who represented them as infants (*ibid.*). In contrast, ‘autonomy as agency’ refers to children’s capacity to self-govern, such as being able to be resistant to parents and peers’ persuasions, and not requiring detachment from relationships with their parents. In this case, the relationship with parents is valued in contrast to idea of infantile children’s relationships with parents where it is devalued.

Aside from the differences between these two approaches, there is a need to recognise cultural variations in agentic regulation, especially between Western middle-class and Asian contexts (Kagitcibasi, 2005; Trommsdorff, 2012). For instance, previous studies suggest that Western agency is associated with ‘*disjoint*’ independence and autonomous self, while the Asian one seeks for ‘*conjoint*’ interdependence (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; 2000; 2003). To this extent, the ‘agency’ explored by Oshana and Beyers above is that of a Western middle-class context, which values ‘*disjoint*’ agency that constructs a bounded individual (Markus and Kitayama, 2003). In contrast, the actions that take place with an interdependent self and associated ‘*conjoint*’ agency tend to be exercised in relation to other people (*ibid.*).

To highlight the notion of ‘*conjoint*’ agency, Markus and Kinoshita further refer to Confucianism, in which hierarchy according to seniority, collectiveness, familial solidarity, duty and dedication are valued (Goodman and Peng, 1996). For example, in the context of Japanese schools, there are notions of *sempai* (senior students) and *kohai* (junior students), which tend to be significant in school sports clubs, such as for baseball and tennis (Johnson and Johnson, 1996). The relationship between *sempai* and *kohai* are paternalistic, which is ultimately rooted in Confucianism: *sempai* instruct *kohai*; *kohai* are expected to listen to *sempai*; *kohai* learn from *sempai* behaviours. Markus and Kinoshita suggest that due to such philosophical standing, *conjoint* (collective) agency is normative. They suggest that the Japanese self exists in relation to other people and is defined by these people in the cultural context: exercising agency means to fulfil ‘reciprocal obligations or expectations’ (Markus and Kitayama, 2003, p.10). In such a way, Asian people appear to have *secondary control*, which limits personal autonomy but values fitting in with people and situations in the affiliated collective group (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). It does not mean, however, that

there is no individual agency, but that agency is experienced in relation to others, being situated in multiple social ties. In such a case, an individual sees significance in social engagement and is defined in relation to other people, and therefore obligations and expectations can act as motivation rather than burdens.

In addition to cultural difference, time also becomes important when considering children's agency. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) stress that the concept of agency has remained ambiguous and fails to identify its temporal dimension. They assert that the concept of agency is a process of social activities ingrained in time, with knowledge from the past, but also with future orientation, both of which are contextualised in the present time. To this extent, they highlight that agency functions differently according to one's interpretation of structural context in time and relationship. Based on such a conceptualisation, Emirbayer and Mische define agency as:

the temporally constructed engagement by actors of different structural environments- the temporal-relational contexts of action- which, through the interplay of habit, imagination and judgement, both produces and transforms those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998, p.970).

The context-embedded notion of agency is also established in several empirical studies; for example, by Stocklin (2012) and Bjerke (2011). Stocklin (2012) advanced the consideration of children's agency in research with children, by exploring children's perspectives of their actions in activities, relations, values, images of self and motivations (*ibid.*, p.449). As a result, Stocklin found that children hardly participate or are heard at the higher administrative level, while they find it much easier to do so in familiar contexts such as with family and friends: depending on the context, the level of children's participation and agency can vary. Bjerke (2011) supports this finding that there are diverse forms of children's participation in various contexts, but asserts that there is a lack of unified understanding about their responsibilities associated with it. A focus-group study in Norway revealed that children and young people desire their voices to be respected and included as active agents. Nevertheless, they also acknowledge a difference in the levels of responsibility between children and adults, where adults have special privilege over children. There is a difference between 'doing things responsibly' and 'doing responsible things' (Such and Walker, 2004; cited in Bjerke, 2011), and children appear to do more things responsibly as they grow older. The different levels of responsibility are negotiated in the relationships

between children and adults (parents).

Following the above literature, this thesis adopts the notion of ‘autonomy as agency (or vice versa)’, which is explained by Beyers et al. (2003) as children’s capacity to self-govern, because other studies suggest the importance of relatedness, context and time dimensions, which appear to be central elements in children’s lives. Children do have some degree of autonomy, but it is not full scale. They are, however, active social agents, who negotiate their decisions and participate in society relationally with adults. Nevertheless, as the preceding paragraphs have explored, the Japanese notion of agency is particular in that it values conjoint agency. Thus, when referring to agency, this thesis maintains both the need to value children having own voice and the recognition that they have to negotiate their agency in relation to their position in the collective setting.

3.1-3 Sociology of childhood in Japan

Similarly to the notion of agency, there are cultural differences in approaches to childhood. For instance, Taga et al. (1998) explore the emergence of the study of childhood in Japan through a meta-analysis of child-related academic articles published between 1946 and 1996. It appears that children were researched mostly in relation to school, rather than in relation to the family and the local community. Taga et al. (*ibid.*) and Mori (1998) argue that until Aries’ work, which revealed a transition in the concept of childhood, was adopted in Japan, approaches taken toward children focused on ‘socialisation’ or ‘child development’. Only after the 1980s was there an attempt to look at children’s lives from children’s own perspectives. In this trend, two approaches can be identified: ‘children as small adults’ and ‘children as a different culture’ (Taga *et al.*, 1998, p.84; Honda, 1982).

The idea of ‘children as small adults’ does not recognise much difference between children and adults, as information technology has enabled children to have an increased access to certain information that used to be available solely to adults (Taga *et al.*, 1998; Honda, 1982). Furthermore, children are now a large market for businesses in terms of consumerism. In this sense, products responding to their needs rather than those of parents are increasingly promoted in the market. Under the latter concept of ‘children as a different culture’, children and adults are entirely distinct from each other (Honda, 1982). Here, children’s world is not even considered as a part of the adults’, but is seen as some place far away from it (Taga *et al.*, 1998). This concept is based on Waksler’s (1991) work on children’s small world, which stressed the need to have a child-centred perspective in

childhood studies, rather than an adults' perspective. To this extent, this approach is similar to that of those who attempt to see children as human-*beings*.

Aside from the above two perspectives, child study scholars in Japan have largely considered education and culture (Mori, 1998). Child-related issues are often discussed and solved in the educational context. This is because children's lives are conventionally thought to take place in school, family and community, and school used to take a central role in tying the family and community together (Koizumi, 2002). Nevertheless, there has been a movement to see children as adults or partners in society; a movement that can be identified in the implementation of the *Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People* (Act No.71)(Cabinet Office, 2009). Following this Act, the '*Vision for Children and Young People*' initiative (Headquarters for Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People, 2010, p.3-4) was adopted to achieve child-adult partnership by promoting five principles:

1. Respect the best interests of children and young people
2. Children and young people are partners living with adults
3. Provide support for children and young people to establish themselves and to become proactive members of society
4. Implement comprehensive support according to the situation of each individual child or young person at multiple levels across the whole of society
5. Reconsider how our adult society should be.

As these principles show, both the Act and the Vision try to capture children and young people from various aspects, such as education, infrastructure, and listening to their voices (child-centred approach). Thus, the Japanese child-related policy seems to be moving a step closer to include children in society rather than taking them for granted.

3.1-4 Beyond the human-*being*/-*becoming* dichotomy: human-*becoming* at all time

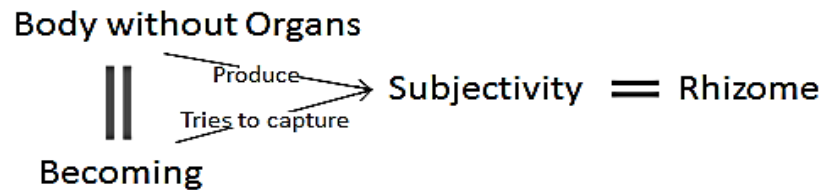
Though the emergence of the sociology of childhood is worthwhile, Uprichard (2008) criticises both previous notions and the new sociology of childhood for their narrow focuses on a dichotomy in time. Conventional sociology recognises children solely as future adults, while the new perspective considers children in their own right, but without much focus on their futurity. Uprichard instead suggests that both children and adults live as 'being and becoming', arguing that the important aspect of 'being' a child is to "look forward" to what a child "becomes" (*ibid.*, p.306). 'Being' can be considered as referring to temporality in time for the person (child), for which time is constituted of 'past, present and future' (*ibid.*,

p.306). Furthermore, the time aspect can also be detected in the UNCRC, as it recognises children's right to have a flourishing life in the future, while at the same time enjoying their childhood as children. The notion of agency can also be considered in this regard, as being an agent involves all three dimensions of time: past, present and future. It must be considered with caution because agency could have a different meaning and function differently between cultures. Nevertheless, Emibayer and Mische (1998) suggest that any kind of agency is constituted of information learnt from past experiences that enables agents to plan ahead for the future, and simultaneously their present time, for internalising and contextualising past events and making sense of the future.

Prout (2005) and Lee (2001) similarly condemn the dichotomy of 'human-being' and 'human-becoming' (Tisdall and Punch, 2014; Mayes, 2015). They follow the concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and see both childhood and adulthood as constituted of multiplicities that are constantly changing: they are various becomings. Deleuze and Guattari considered the world as having the form of a tuber [*rhizome*] and being constituted of assemblages that complexly interlink with each other. These assemblages are constantly in a state of becoming, rather than being.

Rhizomatic is one of the characteristics of Deleuze's main conceptualisation on schizoid subjectivity (Renold and Ringrose, 2011). The subjectivity in his works is seen as a multiple body (assemblages) that is without a centre and is constantly networked to other bodies such as semiotic, material and social flows, rather than as a confined one (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.22-23). The 'bodies' here do not necessarily mean 'human bodies', but sets of multiplicities that constitute spatio-temporal relations (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.263; Coleman, 2008, p.168). In this respect, the body can be understood as a 'relational becoming' rather than a sole 'being' (Coleman, 2008, p.168). 'Being' signifies the state of the bounded self (*ibid.*, p.168), while becoming highlights the *rhizomatic* principle of constant transformation (Renold and Ringrose, 2011). Renold asserts that, to this extent, the subjectivity of a person and its movement are captured through the notion of 'becoming' (Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1 Becoming 'rhizome'



It is important here to pay attention to Deleuze and Guattari's idea of *molecular* and *molar* extension of assemblages, which represents the transformation of assemblages at local and small levels and in broad and wide levels respectively. Though these two terms appear to be dichotomous, they are interlinked, where a change in molecular level causes a molar transformation. Additionally, Deleuze and Guattari see the *rhizomatic* world as a *Body without Organs* (BwO). BwO is not a human body that lacks organs. Rather, it is a body (relational becoming) constituted by organs that affect and are affected by surrounding networks (Holland, 2013p.94). If conventional philosophical thoughts are applied, organism refers to a bounded whole (Colebrook, 2002, p.56). However, a body has multiple potentials in becoming just as an egg does (Young *et al.*, 2013). An egg is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, a process in itself, constantly recoding itself through its relationships with various aspects of the world concomitantly. Thus, BwO is itself a becoming, and produces a subjectivity (Lenz Taguchi and Palmer, 2014). In this sense, both children and adults are constantly incomplete and unfinished. Lee (2001) stresses that it is undeniable that there are certain levels of difference between children and adults. However, acknowledging this is different from seeing children as human-becomings and adults as human beings. Children and adults are, in this sense, various states of becoming in relation to others (Mayes, 2015).

Wenzer (2004, p.323) further discusses that the understanding of 'competence' should be different from how it has been argued in the sociology of childhood. The notion of 'competent child' attempts to treat children as equal to adults, whose competency is defined by the 'ideal state of things' (*ibid.*, p.323). In other words, competency was considered in relation to the one directional time frame originally featured in dichotomous consideration. Instead of treating the competency as 'being a child', Wenzer treats it as a kind of abstract machine (BwO) that produces subjectivities for children through networks with others such as family and institutions. Wenzer argues that the (*molecular*) abstract machine, which is a child in this study, is made in connection to various other (*molar*) machines; for example, economic, academic, pedagogical and ITC-political machines. Each *becoming* abstract machine has connections to other machines, while at the same time carrying the 'individual

histories and interests' (Wenzer, 2004, p.325). The interplays of the machines become crucial in considering about each abstract machine. As the above points out, 'being' is considered as only a temporary point in the becoming process, and children become free from dichotomous distinction between childhood and adulthood. This way of using 'becoming' allows the child to be free from intentions imposed by adults: they are 'becoming-world' (Wenzer, 2004, p.329).

3.1-5 Summary: seeing children with a child-centred approach

This section looked at the emergence of childhood study that moved onto a child-centred approach with a focus on children as human-*beings* and the consideration of both children and adults as human-*becomings* according to *rhizome* theory. Of foremost importance in the development of childhood study is the recognition and promotion of children's voices in public discourse. When considering children's voices, it is essential to be aware that the overall concept of agency could have various meanings and functions in different cultures. In the Asian context, *conjoint* agency, which functions based on interdependency, is valued more than *disjoint* individualist independence. Nevertheless, this does not mean that children's agency and voices are insignificant in this context, and the present study still employs a child-centred approach to see their life-experiences. When a child-centred approach is taken, new perspectives about social aspects can be identified, such as perceptions of time and space. The following section considers these aspects in relation to and from children's perspectives.

3.2 Children's perceptions of time and space

With transitions in studies of childhood to recognise their lives from their perspectives, there emerged a need to reconsider notions of time and space (James *et al.*, 1998). In terms of time, childhood is a temporal period that any person would experience while growing up; for example, for grown-ups it is the past, while it is the present time for children themselves and for those who have children. In this respect, chronological age can be seen as merely a social construction to regulate time passing, rather than as biological development (*ibid.*). In similar manner, 'space (or place)' is an essential aspect to conceptualise the nature of children's lives (Rasmussen, 2004). Strandell (2007, 49) highlights that 'childhood identity becomes fixed to certain places and activities'. This is because, for example, space is utilized according to the intent of society, such as caring for and protecting children (James *et al.*, 1998). Considering this, the following sections look at the notion of time and space in children's lives.

3.2-1 Children's time

In sociology and anthropology, childhood has been made into a 'social institution and life course category' (Rogers and Standing, 1981, p.15; cited in James *et al.*, 1998; Reynaert *et al.*, 2009). These two forms have specificities, both at the cultural and the temporal level, because 'childhood' is produced in specific generations in different ways, and is situated in particular social structures (Bromley, 1988). To this extent, childhood is a relational concept to adulthood: it always entails dichotomy with parents, teachers or other agents; children have been and are considered to develop 'towards' adulthood; childhood entails power relationships with adults (Jenks, 1996; O'Neill, 1995). The term 'parents' is also relational to children, and this is why children could be a reference point for parenthood, as Ambert (1994, p.530) notes: 'when one sees children, one 'sees' parents'. In this respect, children's culture can be understood only in response to a generational change between adults and children.

James *et al.* (1998) consider this relational concept of time by looking at the school curriculum. The curriculum signifies the hierarchical class relationship positioned by age difference with an assumption that all members of the age grade develop at the same speed and level. In such a way, anomalies are not necessarily welcomed in the society, and children are conceptualised in terms of particular times: children are seen as a holistic group with no variation. However, 'children' are constructed as a collection of individuals, and thus they need to be treated and explored as individuals. Similarly to James *et al.*, Zeiher (2007) explores the temporality of childhood in relation to modern industrial society. In a capitalist and industrial society, time has increasingly been recognised as 'resource' rather than mere mechanic time. In such a society, 'having' and 'controlling' time in a context of 'time welfare' can dominate people's lives. School puts children in a setting where time is deliberately controlled in order to prepare them for the future-working world. Närväanen and Näsman (2007) argue that school is exclusively future-oriented institution, while at the same time its institutionalisation is based on the past and the present, as these two time frames inform the future (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000; cited in Närväanen and Näsman, 2007). Nevertheless, conceptualising that children ascend the ladder (school grades) to attain a more powerful position again signifies that children are seen as future adults and are at risk of being judged and monitored as such by adults (James and Prout, 1997b). The above points being considered, James *et al.* (1997a) note that children's lives are significantly affected by their relationships and the learning processes constructed in the school system.

The development of a capital economy also imposes an increased value on children's education. Parents feel that they have responsibility to prepare children to be 'successful' adults in the future. To this extent, education can easily be prioritised by parents, based on the idea that it is also in children's own interest to do well for the future. According to Zeiher (2007), educational goals for children are no longer imposed by parents, but rather they come about from children's own desire and self-direction: children are now exposed to various options, from which they make choices and decisions. Facing various options, children need accurate information to make right choices, and to become able to make appointments and decisions for the future. Getting used to such decision-making processes, children's play time becomes less spontaneous, and increasingly requires making appointments between friends (Zeiher, 2007).

Although 'time' may appear to be a familiar concept for most people, it is actually a fuzzy concept. There is a multiplicity of times, rather than a single flow of time as a river from the past to the future (Merleau-Ponty, 1945). This multiplicity emerges due to differences between people who are the observers of the flow: there is a variation in perceptions of time between individuals. Likewise, Kurt Lewin (1952) discussed how individuals keep reconstructing a time perspective, according to a situation and his or her view about the past and the future. The size of such a time perspective can also differ across the course of a life. For example, a little child would act on 'primitive behaviour', which is based on small time-scales consisting of the present affected by the immediate past and future. As the child grows older, the scale is enlarged, and their present time is affected by more distant past and future (*enlargement of time perspective*).

Lewin further argued that children learn to differentiate *reality* and *irreality* as they grow up (*differentiation of reality and irreality*). For example, Shirai (2006) explored the anxiety young people hold in the midst of a competitive setting, such as an entrance examination, and how it may be affected by time perspectives. Going a step further from Lewin's theory of the reality-irreality time perspective, Shirai (*ibid.*) argues that one's time perspective is formed through her experience and personal relationships. Shirai (2004) refers to Nurmi's (2001) work, which discusses the effect of important people on one's decisions. In this case, the time perspective of significant others, such as parents, may affect the child's life. Hence, applying this consideration to academic competition, parents' expectations of a child's educational success that is set within their time perspective may affect that of the child. Thus,

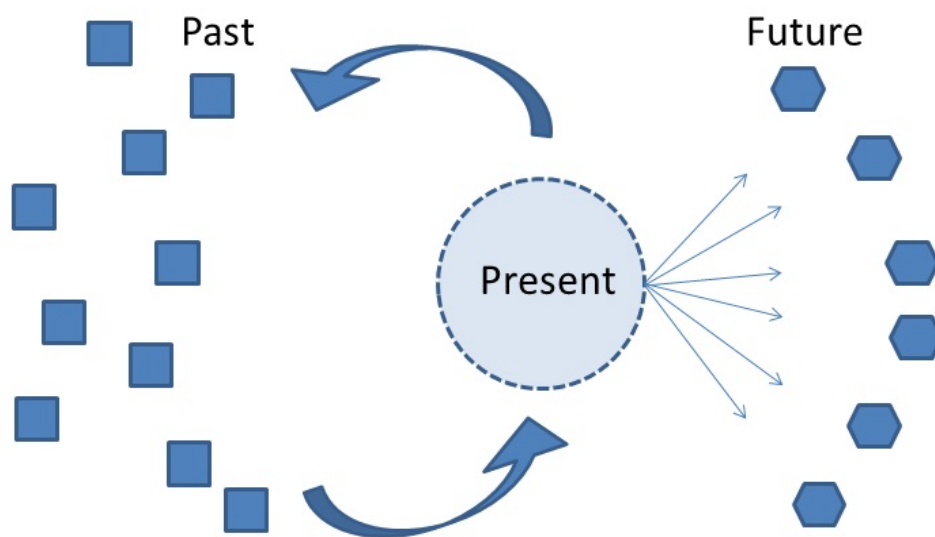
academic competition, for example, meritocracy, which was explored in Chapter 2 (see section 2.2), is highly related to children's time perspectives. Referring to Lewin's *reality-irreality differentiation*, Shirai discussed that hope diminishes as a child grows up, by facing reality following the enlargement of time perspectives rather than tending to focus on the present. As a result, anxiety about the future increases, and facing it is a sign of development for young people (Shirai, 2006). Accordingly, older children who are preparing for an entrance examination may face the need to balance their hope of succeeding and their anxiety of failing the entrance examination.

Furthermore, in addition to *rhizome* (see section 3.1-4 in this chapter), Deleuze discussed the notion of time in *Difference and Repetition* (1968). Unlike the conventional notion of time as a linear line, Deleuze considered it as 'non-linear and irreversible' (Holland, 2013, p.17). His consideration of time is based largely on the works of Henri Bergson, who discussed *la duree* (duration) (Hodges, 2008). Hodges explains that both Bergson and Deleuze focused on a qualitative understanding of time, which consists of a relational entity, where there are interrelations of assemblages. To this extent, their concept of time is relational. Deleuze's (1968) work considered three syntheses of time – the present, past and future. In terms of the first synthesis of the present time, the event taking place in the present time determines what dimension or meaning the past and future event had or will have (Williams, 2011). In other words, the significance of the past event can change depending on what a person makes of the 'living present', and future possibilities would be altered accordingly (Deleuze, 1968). Thus, the present time is constantly reaching out back and forth in time, and generating new meanings and possibilities (Williams, 2011). Holland (2013) explains that for this reason, Deleuze considers the present as *phenomenology*, in relation to how a person experiences the present time.

The second synthesis of the past acts as an archive of diverse experiences. For considering the archive, Deleuze referred to the work of Henri Bergson (Holland, 2013). Bergson considered that there are two centres in the form of the world: the real and the virtual (Deleuze, 1968). The real world entails 'perception-images' in the present time, and the virtual one holds 'memory-images' in the past. Applying this, the past does not exist in order of linearity, but as an entity of events (virtual world) that can associate back to the present. For example, when a person thinks about a past event, she does not reel the line of time back to when it happened. Instead, she would retrieve the memory of an event in association to

what she is experiencing or thinking in the present time. The potential for new events (third synthesis of future) is accordingly diverse because of the multiple presents being influenced by the archive of the past. The present experience can travel to the future, but not to the past. However, the forming of a new event is not the only aspect of the future (Williams, 2011). From these points, Williams (2011, p.16) discusses that the meaning of time travel for Deleuze is different from that of the conventional linear one, as he assumes the transformation of the significance of the past and the future (Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-2 Deleuze's conceptualisation of time with focus on the present



When considering the concept of time in the Japanese context, there appears to be a particularity that it is associated with the notion of effort, and this can be seen from the notion of *Gambaru*. To discuss the significance of *Gambaru*, Steger (2006) conducted a study on Japanese high-school students who sleep through the school classes. Sleeping through classes is called *Inemuri*, and as much as 30% of junior high-school students constantly do so (Hattori *et al.*, 2010). The most frequent reason raised for *Inemuri* is tiredness and lack of sleep (Kunikata and Inoue, 2012). In her study, Steger (2006) discussed that the notion of *Gambaru* functions as a particular subjective time for Japanese people. As 'Gambaru' is a concept that is not easily translatable into English, Kawagishi (2011) explored the way in which the translation seems the most alike to its nuance. *Gambaru* means something similar to 'good luck'; however, it must be treated with caution that the latter entails the sense of one's reliance on the luck rather than her or his effort. Exploring several interpretations, Kawagishi (2011) proposed that *Gambaru* can be translated in two ways: 'hang in there' and

‘do your best’ and it connotes ‘patience’ and ‘display’, which relates to the conjoint agency in Japanese context.

Japanese people’s emphasis on effort is different from Western cultures, where ability (for example, IQ) is valued (Fujita, 1994). *Gambaru* is a part of effort, and it has been utilised in Japan to motivate the public on the prerequisite that everyone has equal opportunities and that one may succeed only if he or she makes an effort (Kariya, 2000; Fujita, 1994). This ideology of equal opportunity in turn pushes people into competition. Fujita (1994) discusses that the education system also plays a part in fostering the importance of making an effort. While IQ is seen as a valid measure of one’s ability in Western countries, it is not the case in Japan. In Japan, students in secondary education constantly face their deviation values (*Hensachi*), which shows one’s academic position relative to the mass, through the simultaneous examinations across the country. In this case, children are always situated in the selection process in relation to others by comparing with each other. Because *Hensachi* is relative to others, it allows a person to be objectively and subjectively seen by and among others. Fujita conducted interviews with junior high-school students, and it became apparent that they consider the deviation values as their academic ability. By ‘academic ability’, however, children seem not to mean their scholastic skill, but also the symbolic value of a person and one’s possibilities for the future: *Hensachi* or academic ability is perceived as an indicator of personality. Thus, ‘*Gambaru*’ or the effort they make to improve their educational ability is extended to the area of personal representation.

Kariya (2000) further argued that the Japanese meritocracy (see Chapter 2 sections 2.2 and 2.4) is embedded in the inequality of effort. In his study, quantity of study-time was considered as an indicator of the amount of effort people invested in their education. Following an analysis of the survey, Kariya concluded that there is an inequality in the effort made by different income classes. Despite the simplicity of this indicator, the definition of ‘study-time’ must be considered carefully here. Kariya’s source of analysis was based on a two-round survey. The first round did not include study-time spent at Juku. The second round, however, did include study-time spent at Juku. Kariya controlled the difference in the process of analysis, but ambiguity remains in the notion of ‘study-time’. In fact, the survey conducted by Benesse (2011) defined that study-time did not include time at school and Juku, and with a personal tutor. Nevertheless, it is evident that Japanese people commonly consider study-time as an indicator of the level of effort put in to education.

Though it is clear that effort plays a significant role in people's lives, there is an uncertainty and a variation in reasons why Japanese people tend to attribute their success or failure to effort making. In order to clarify why they may *Gambaru* at all, Ueno (2001) conducted a small survey with university students. From the survey, it emerged that there are nine reasons why university students were making an effort in studying: content, practical use, relational, unavoidable situation, self-esteem, effort, reward, money and 'no reason', which are shown in Table 3-1 with an explanation of what constitutes these dimensions. From these inclinations, it appears that 'effort' can be applied in many aspects of people's lives, not only in education or work but also on a personal levels

Table 3-1 Influencing factors for university students to make effort

Content	The content of study is interesting. e.g. Want to increase knowledge.
Practical use	Studying will be useful for the future and outcome. e.g. Want to leave a record of achievement.
Relational	Studying because of relationships with other people. e.g. -Other people are making an effort. -Other people have high expectations of me.
Unavoidable situation	The situation forces me to make an effort. e.g. It is a duty to study.
Self esteem	Desire to succeed and not to lose against others. e.g. Want to be approved by other people.
Effort	Because there is value in making an effort.
Reward	Because I want to be rewarded.
Money	To make money.
No reason	

(Ueno, 2001, p.168)

3.2-2 Children's space⁵

Since the end of 1980s there has been an increase in research exploring the notion of 'space' when considering childhood. James et al. (1998, p.38) explore children's 'space' and their lives in three distinctive forms: 'the school, the city and the home'. These three spaces hold control over children, but in different forms and timeframes: children's time and space are complexly interlinked. Their lives are increasingly separated according to the functions of the spaces, along with industrial modernisation. A significant example of this

⁵ In this thesis, 'space' and 'place' are used interchangeably. However, their difference is also recognised following Rasmussen (2004)

Space: It is more abstract than place, and can mean only a geographical area.

Place: It is a space with meaning that is attributed by people through experiences.

spatialisation is children at school. As explored above, variation in time can provide children with different experiences. This is the same for space, as time goes by they gain access to more spaces. According to James et al., the school timetables make clear distinctions not only in time but also in space for children, drawing significant differences in the activities that they ought to do at particular times. In relation to this, people are increasingly spatialised both in real (geographic) and ideal (social roles) terms (Foucault, 1986), and children also learn their societal role within the school system, e.g. gendered roles (James *et al.*, 1998).

Urban areas are also increasingly fractioned. The city itself does not function as school does under a curriculum, but it segregates groups according to ethnicity, power and age (James *et al.*, 1998). The past century saw a shift in children's place from public to domestic and institutionalised space (*ibid.*). The area outside of such institutions is dangerous for children, and thus they need to be protected. This can be signified by the disappearance of children from the street, as they need to be accompanied by adults, either by car or hand in hand (Sibley, 1995). If children who are supposed to fit into the spaces created for them by adults emerge in the street, it is a sign of trouble: visible children are those who are troubled. As for domestic spaces, home is also increasingly regulated by rules and assumptions laid down by the social construction of childhood. Parents, especially mothers in the East Asian context, are becoming more positional, and they may impose a number of rules on their children (Seltzer and Ryff, 1996; in Jou, 2013). Hence, children appear to be increasingly losing their freedom in their own lives.

In terms of children's spatial freedom, Foucault (1986) sees spaces in society as binary, such as utopia and heterotopia, each space entailing meaning for the people belonging there, rather than as merely a physical existence of space. Utopia is society in its perfect form, which, in other words, does not exist. Heterotopia, on the other hand, does exist; however, it is a mirrored space to the utopia in an enacted form. McNamee (2000) applied this concept to children's everyday life, especially in relation to their use of video games. Video games present a high resemblance to the concept of heterotopia, as it exposes children to three dimensional realities in two dimensional formats within a video game system. This allows children to escape from 'the boundaries around childhood' (McNamee, 2000, p.490). Stemming from this concept, another model of space has emerged in recent years: the notion of 'thirdspace' (Hengst, 2007).

The '*Thirdspace*' perspective was developed extensively by Homi Bhabha (1994) and

Edward Soja (1996). Soja argues that understanding the world has always required considering its historical and social aspects concurrently. In recent years, however, the third aspect, 'spatial', gained recognition as a factor to further understand the human world. Soja (1996, p.70) calls these three aspects the 'ontological trialectic', with which is it possible to understand 'what the world must be like'. He clarifies the epistemological standing and meanings for each part of the ontological trialectic: the 'trialectic of spatiality' – perceived (historical), conceived (sociality) and lived (spatiality). These components are derived from Lefebvre's (1991) work, in which Lefebvre refers to those spaces as 'spatial practice', 'presentation of space' and 'spaces of representation' respectively. The *Thirdspace* comes between *Firstspace* (perceived) and *Secondspace* (conceived) worlds, a place where the real and the imagined coexist. For example, for those who are oppressed, the real world (*Firstspace*) may be a place where their freedom is suppressed, while in the *Secondspace* they have a better life that matches up to their expectations. *Thirdspace* is a combination of these two, which could be seen, for example, from the construction of ethnicity-specific areas in a city.

If the notion of *Thirdspace* is applied to children, it is a space between childhood and adulthood where a person's identity becomes articulated (Hengst, 2007). Matthews et al. (2000) apply this notion to 'young people in the street', arguing that the street acts as the *Thirdspace* for them where they can be neither adults nor fully children. The shopping mall can act as a particular type of 'street as thirdspace' for children, as both children's and adults' cultures coexist in the mall. The shopping mall becomes 'a convenient meeting place' for young people, because those who are territorially conquered (children) by others (adults) can either accept such a position, or 'mobilise' against the subordination. In either case, they will be spatialised, facing a struggle against others (Matthews *et al.*, 2000, p.290).

Japanese spatial concepts in relation to relationships: Ibasho, Air and Bocci

Looking into childhood in relation to space in the Japanese context, there are several spatial concepts particular to the culture. For example, there is a notion of *Michikusa* that resembles Soja's *Thirdspace*, but with a focus on children returning home (Mizuki and Minami, 2010). 'Michikusa' is a specially assigned word in Japanese for 'children's play while returning home from school' (*ibid.*, p.65). Mizuki studied one school area in Japan where there was a plan to improve the school zone with a sidewalk in order to enhance children's safety. This study showed that the specific physical space does not have same

meaning for adults and children.

Furthermore, Tanaka (2001) discusses that urbanisation in Japan has led to the collapse of children's collectedness in forming groups. Children's space traditionally has been school, family and local community (Shakai Kyouiku Shingikai Kengikai, 1974 June 24th; in Tanaka, 2001). Uehira (2001) argues that family and local community are no longer functioning as they are expected to, and school is gradually losing its meaning as a core facilitator of children's education. He contends that children no longer 'must' attend the compulsory schools, as there are far more variations in educational opportunities 'outside' of compulsory schooling, such as Juku. Tanaka (2001) refers to the collision of children's collectivism as the breakdown of three aspects of *Kan*⁶ (*space*: 間) – 'time (*jikan*: 時間)', 'space (*kuukan*: 空間)' and 'friends (*nakama*: 仲間)'. The following sections explore the spatial concepts that emerge from three *Kan* in Japanese childhood discourse: *Ibasho*, *Air* and *Bocci*.

Ibasho

In relation to space and friends in three *Kan*, there is a particular notion that has been a centre of concern for children in past thirty years: *Ibasho*. In order to clarify the definition, Takatsuka (2001, p.40) explores the change in the notion of *Ibasho*, literally translated as 'location, place, whereabouts', where space and time meet. However, Takatsuka explains that for Japanese youth, this particular word means 'a place that means something for oneself respective to his social relationship' (*ibid.*, p.40), rather than merely a physical location. Hagiwara (2001a, p.63) explains further:

1. *Ibasho* exists with the feeling of 'self';
2. *Ibasho* occurs based on the relationship of oneself and others within mutual recognition;
3. *Ibasho* occurs when a person with a living body interpenetrate with other people, matters and objects,
4. *Ibasho* is about a person's acquisition of his position in the world (in relation to other people, matters and objects), and it also leads to one's course of action in life.

⁶ There are two ways to read the Kanji (Chinese character) in Japanese. For this character 間, one way is to read it as '*kan*' and the other is '*ma*'. In either way, this character means 'space', but can be used to make other words such as above: time, space and friends.

The notion of *Ibasho* emerged as a result of discussion about children who have a phobia of school (Ishimoto, 2009). In order to provide a space for those children, their parents set up free schools called 'Tokyo Shure'. As these provide students a place to be, it has increasingly been recognised as an *Ibasho* for them (Okuti, 2006; cited in Ishimoto, 2009, p.94). Thus, *Ibasho* became associated with a negative feature as a shelter to escape from schooling (Sumita, 2003). Following Hagiwara's (2001a) identification of the characteristics of *Ibasho*, it appears that *Ibasho* depends on the extent of social relationships that a person has. Nevertheless, the core actors, such as the local community and family that used to construct such relationships, became unstable at the same time, and young people now seem to struggle to find their *Ibasho* where they feel the value of own existential being, and are to foresee their future. Similarly, Shimizu (2012) explored junior high school students' sense of the absence of *Ibasho*. This sense of absence has been increasingly discussed in public on a daily basis. Shimizu cites previous literatures that state that Japanese people have traditionally been collective, and a person always felt the need to belong to a group. This feeling turns into one's wish not to be alone, and if she or he does become so, it can be a hardship. Shimizu's findings suggest that 'not having *Ibasho*' means 'not having self'. 'Self' here does not mean ego or one's self. Instead, similarly to the notion of conjoint agency in the Japanese context, it is more inclusive of relationships with other people in which the self is recognised and realised. To this extent, the 'absence of *Ibasho*' resembles the notion of 'social death'. Guenther (2013, p.xx-xxi) defines 'social death' as the following:

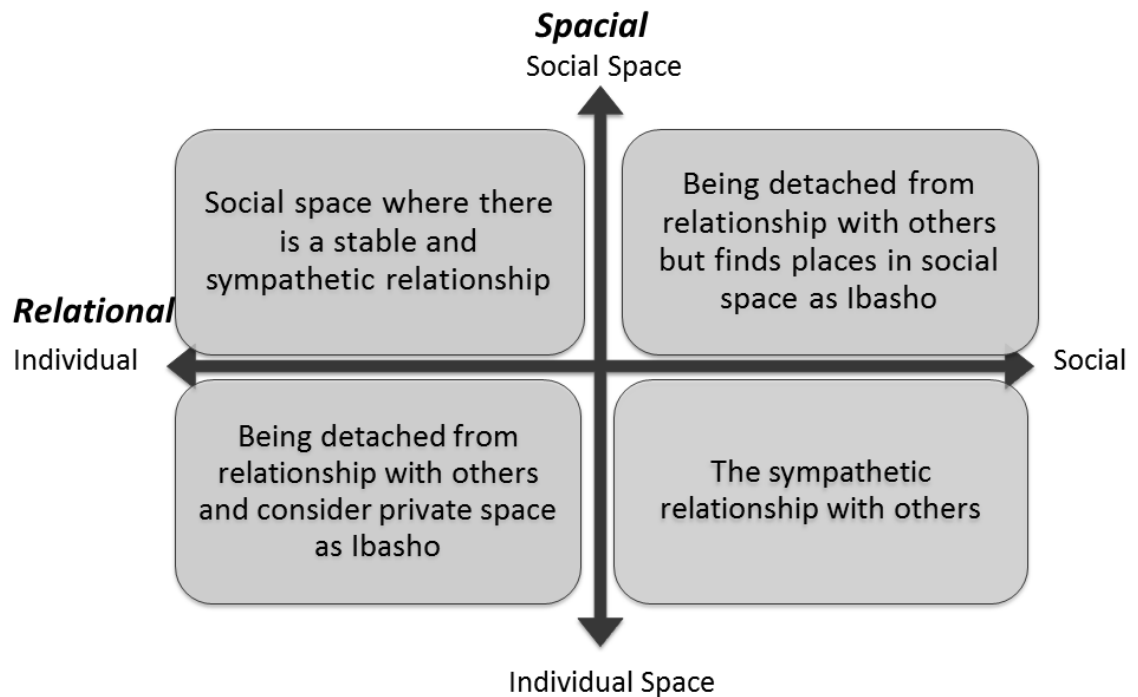
Social death is the effect of a (social) practice in which a person or group of people is excluded, dominated, or humiliated to the point of becoming dead to the rest of society. [...] To be socially dead is to be deprived of the network of social relations, particularly kinship relations, that would otherwise support, protect, and give meaning to one's precarious life as an individual.

Again, relationships appear to be the essential part of *Ibasho*. Unlike its origin, *Ibasho* does not entirely refer to the negative aspect any more, but it is now associated more with positive understandings, such as a place that accepts oneself and to relax. Sumita (2003) suggests that this transition occurred along with social changes, where people's lives became increasingly individualised.

With the above characteristics in mind, Sumita (2003) considered the theory of children's *Ibasho*. According to Sumita, *Ibasho* consists of two conditions: subjective and objective. The subjective condition is associated with how children perceive places as their *Ibasho*.

The objective condition, on the other hand, contains two aspects: relational and spatial. The factors that make children consider certain places (subjective conditions) as *Ibasho* are in fact derived from objective factors because having a stable relationship with others that takes place in certain spaces is important for actualisation. Concerning these conditions, Sumita developed a framework of *Ibasho*, as can be seen in Figure 3-3 below.

Figure 3-3 Types of *Ibasho* places



(Sumita, 2003, p.12)

The upper-right form of *Ibasho* is realised when children feel they have stable relationships with others in social spaces. For example, school is where children gather daily and spend time together. In this case, if children have steady relationships with friends or teachers, they may consider school their *Ibasho*. The bottom-right quarter of *Ibasho* tends to take place in more intimate spaces, such as the home, and with significant others. The bottom-left kind of *Ibasho* for children emerges in private spaces when children are separated from personal relationships with others. An example of this kind of space is a child's own room, but there are two different ways it is perceived as *Ibasho* by children. One is that their own room functions as only their *Ibasho* and no one else's. The other is that children have several *Ibashos*, and their own room operates as one of them. Tanaka (2003) discusses that children are able to find multiple *Ibashos* as children belong to various kinds of social groups and places such as family, school and community. This is why children may

find their own room as one of the *Ibashos*, but it could also be the only one. The *Ibasho* in the upper-left corner of the framework becomes so in non-private spaces without deep personal relationships. For instance, the shopping mall and the park can be such places, but children do not necessarily interact with anyone there.

This variation can also be observed in the survey on primary and junior high school children's perceptions of space conducted by the Cabinet Office (Directorate General for Policies on Cohesive Society, 2014b). From the survey data, it appears that there are different characteristics in types of *Ibasho* across childhood. Around 90% of students in the final two years of primary school (11 to 12 year-olds) and junior high school (13 to 15 year-olds) find home a place to feel at ease, with school coming next. It also became evident in the data that the proportion of children who feel relaxed at home decreases as they get older, ranging from 91% of fifth-grade [P5] (11 year-olds) to 87.2% of ninth-grade [J3] (15 year-olds). Concurrently, the proportion of children who feel at ease neither at home nor at school slightly increases as they grow older. Nevertheless, the survey shows that home remains the most relaxing place for children, despite these changes across childhood.

Ibasho has also appeared in the recent policy discourses. For example, Chapter 2 (section 2.4) briefly explored the '*After-school Comprehensive Plan for Children* (放課後子ども総合プラン)' implemented by MEXT and MHLW jointly in 2014. To recapitulate, one of the aims of this policy is to encourage women to participate in the labour market by providing children a place to be, which the policy document refers to as *Ibasho*. In other words, *Ibasho* is treated as somewhere children can be placed in afterschool hours, instead of the various understandings that have been discussed in the existing literature.

Air

Other than *Ibasho*, there is a particular notion of 'reading the *Air*' in Japan that regulates spaces among people. To sense the situation or atmosphere is understood as '*Ba no Kuuki wo yomu*' in Japanese. Reizei (2012) explains that this concept is particular in Japan. *Ba* (場) means 'place' and *Kuki* (空気) means '*Air*'. If the above phrase were literally translated, it means 'to read the *Air* of the place'. Japanese people live with double standards between logical and '*Air*' judgments (Yamamoto, 2013). In English, it can otherwise be understood as a 'mood', which refers to some state of feeling. Here, the mood has a sense of temporality in the present time, and this temporality has a significant meaning in Japanese society. If

people make decisions logically, there would be only one or two conclusions. However, when *Air* is involved in the process, there could be several different conclusions. Yamamoto (2013) explains that this is due to control by the ‘sense of presence’, which is similar to ‘hylotheism’ in Japan. Hylotheism considers that Gods exist in materials. To this extent, *Air* or mood holds absolute power that people cannot go against, and it functions particularly in the present time.

By looking at how the Japanese language functions, Reizei (2012) summarises that there are two kinds of *Air*: ‘*Air* in relationships’ and ‘*Air* in place’. ‘*Air* in relationships’ occurs between two people, on the grounds that they share the same understanding of certain things through conversation. With this, they are able to understand each other ‘in the *Air* (mood) at a certain point’. ‘*Air* in place’, on the other hand, occurs when there are more than three people, and when there is a sense of agreement in the group that everyone shares a certain understanding and a thought. If one does not know or disagrees with the understanding among the group, this person does not fit into the ‘*Air*’. Thus, the ‘*Air*’ functions as if it has an authority over the people that are present and no one is able to go against it. Reizei argues that this is also because of the fluidity of the Japanese language. If a Japanese word is understood as a living thing, its life span is very short and its meaning keeps changing very quickly all the time. People need to be up-to-date about such changes, and there is pressure to follow them. Hence, because of the functions of *Air*, children could feel a pressure to agree with the *Air* produced among friends, even if they want to express their own opinions.

Bocci

In relation to ‘*Air*’, there is another notion in Japan that has a large significance in children’s lives – *Bocci*. ‘Being alone’ in Japanese is ‘*hitoribocchi*’, meaning ‘solely alone’. Reizei (2012) explains that the word ‘*Bocci*’ is the shortened version of the word, and this shortening indicates that it is becoming a certain kind of phenomenon. ‘*Bocci*’, according to Asahi Shinbun (2014), refers to someone who is in the state of not being able to make friends, as well as being simply alone. In this case, children do not always want not to be alone.

Nonetheless, Tsuji (2009) suggests that children and young people are not afraid of being alone, but of being seen by others as not being able to make and/or have friends. According to Wada (2010), this is most prominent at lunchtimes at work or in school, and Kuramoto (2013) argues that this characteristic is significant for women and girls. The reason that lunchtime becomes crucial is because it is time that can be used fairly freely by workers and

students. During work time or lessons, each worker or student is allocated to their own seat. However, lunchtime allows them to gather in groups to enjoy the meal, which at the same time creates pressure to be with someone. Kuramoto investigates this phenomenon, known as '*Seken*', in relation to society because it has significant power to put restrictions on Japanese people's behaviour. '*Seken*' refers to a collection of people who fundamentally are acquaintances (Iwasaki, 2002). Kuramoto (2013) considers that people are generally worried about how they are presented in the eyes of the '*Seken*'. '*Seken*' is useful to consider alongside the fear of *Bocci* in general, but *Air* also appears to be suitable for looking at children's *Bocci*.

3.2-3 Summary: children's space and time

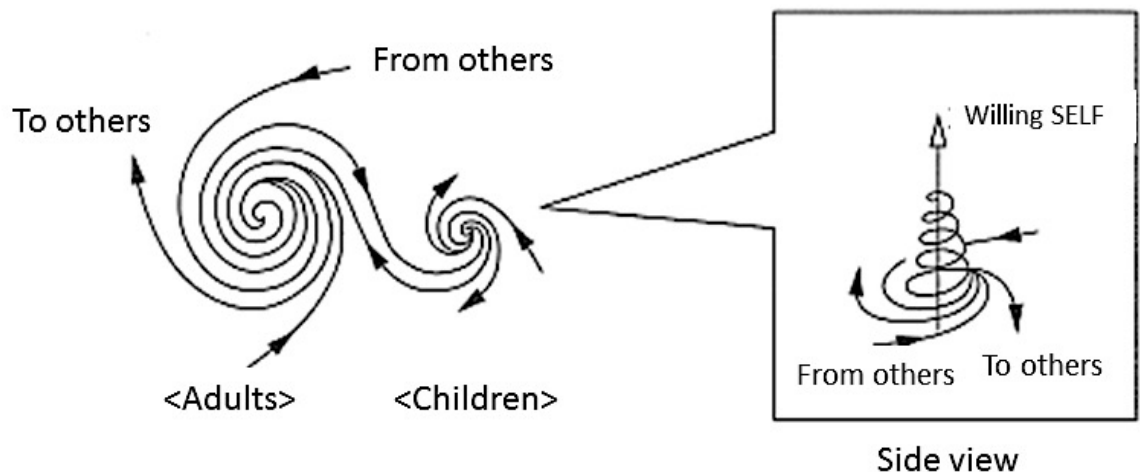
It is essential to look into notions of time and space when considering childhood. It is a temporal period of people's lives and is relational to adulthood, which also acts as a power relationship between children and adults. However, it needs to be remembered that time is a fuzzy concept, having multiplicities in its meaning and being experienced in various ways. How children's perception of time is understood is also problematic, as it is perceived as an inclusive institution and regulated according to the socially constructed chronological age of children: there is a need to recognise diversity within childhood. Furthermore, time is associated with the amount of effort (*Gambaru*) that people make in Japan. Time thus has multiple functions and perceptions. As for the notion of children's space, Bhabha and Soja's concept of the 'Thirdspace' can be applied. For children, the thirdspace is a place between childhood and adulthood where their identities are secured. As society industrialises, children's spaces are also increasingly separated depending on their function and according to timeframes, such as the school timetable, and thus children's time and space are complexly interlinked. Last but not least, there are a few spatial concepts that are particular in Japan: *Michikusa*, *Ibasho*, *Air*, and *Bocci*. Despite referring to space, they appear to include personal relationships in their realisation, showing their significance in Japan. Following this exploration of concepts associated with childhood generally and in Japan, the next section attempts to theorise childhood in the Japanese context.

3.3 Theorising childhood in the Japanese context

So far this chapter has explored past studies on childhood and children's time and space. Here, those studies are applied further to consider the case of Japanese children in particular. Returning to the concept of *Ibasho*, Hagiwara (2001b) explores children's *Ibasho* in terms

of their relationships not only with other children but also with adults. Hagiwara argues that child development requires quality personal relationships rather than time spent with others. To this extent, children exercise their agency and find ways to construct their lives based on agency and their relationships with adults. Figure 3-4 symbolises this, where adults take children and children take adults in and out in their relationships, and simultaneously children exercise their agency.

Figure 3-4 Image of relational and autonomous child's presence



(Hagiwara, 2001b, p.78)

Figure 3-5 below is the combined version of this presence of the agentic and relational child and the ecology of human development discussed by Bronfenbrenner (1979). The arrow in Figure 3-4, entitled 'willing SELF', corresponds to the 'individual child' in the ecology model shown in Figure 3-5 and Figure 3-6. In Figure 3-5, the 'willing SELF' also shows the timeline where children develop to be able to exercise their agency. Children's access to the ecology system becomes bigger because, for the child, the world or environment where he or she is situated becomes bigger as he or she gains higher levels of autonomy. Relations that she can obtain as an adult can be bigger than those she can obtain as a child, and thus the ecology model with a timeline becomes cone-shaped.

Figure 3-5 Ecology of human development, autonomy and relations

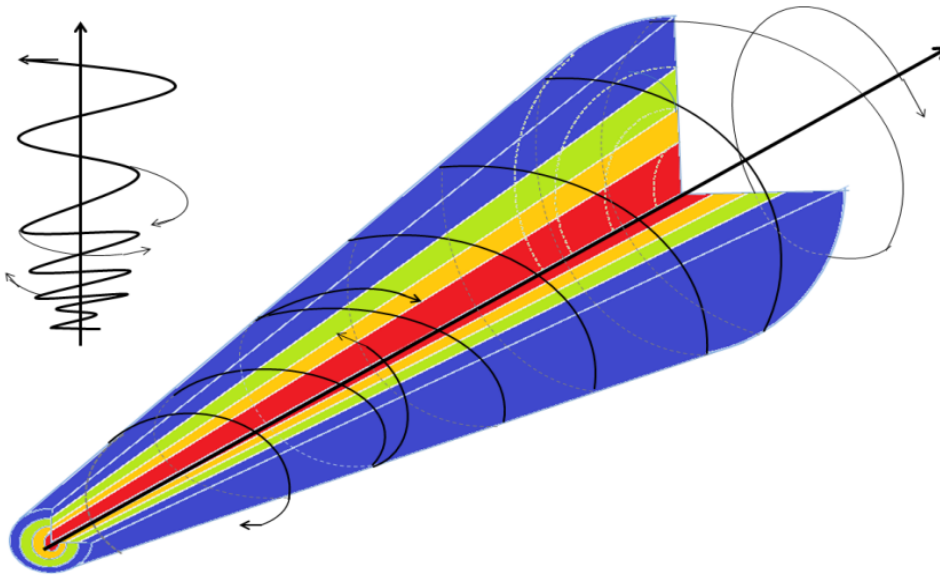
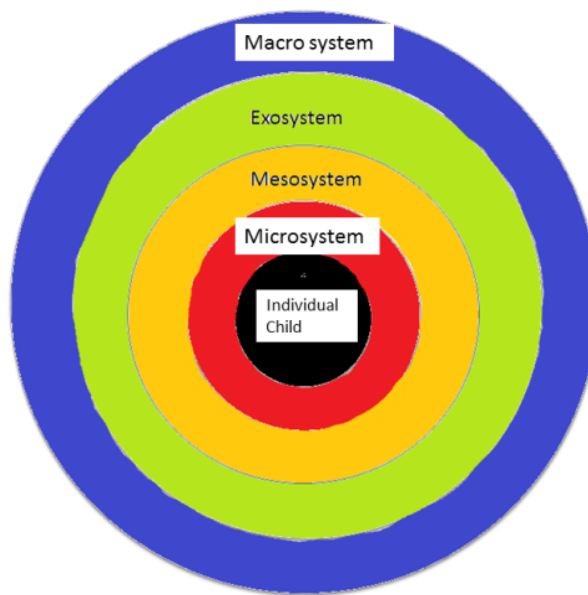


Figure 3-6 Ecology of human development colour definition



This conceptualisation of ‘time’ may conflict with the attempt made by the new sociology of childhood that focuses on the present rather than the future, as well as the Deleuzian consideration of time. As Uprichard (2008) argued, children and adults are both experiencing ‘being and becoming’. Additionally, though ‘being’ may reflect the temporal time, this ‘present’ is made of ‘past, present and future’ (*ibid.*, p.306). Deleuze’s (1968) concept of time could appear to criticise the linear understandings of time, but his work is associated with the perception and experience of time, rather than its flow. Thus, it can be considered that Deleuzian time may be experienced cyclically but along linear understandings of time at the same time. In these respects, looking at children as human beings does have to consider

their experience along the line of lasting time. In fact, this aspect of experienced and linear time is also mentioned in Bronfenbrenner's (1986) later work, which discusses the *chronosystem* model. This model considers both personal and environmental changes, as well as their dynamic associations. For example, in the context of this research, the concept of chronosystem can be applied to considering a child's realisation of her *Ibasho*. If she fails to secure her *Ibasho*, she could have a similar feeling to a sense of social death. Such absence of *Ibasho* can be a distinctive experience to this person's life-course. Instead of the mere observation of the longitudinal developmental of a person, the chronosystem model allows for a more dynamic exploration of life transitions and experiences.

Furthermore, although it is inherently associated with space, the notion of *Michikusa* (see section 3.2-2) also includes a dimension of time. Mizuki and Minami (2010) explored children's 'Michikusa' in Japan, and Sato and Valsiner (2010) refer to their work extensively in relation to two kinds of time: inherent duration and measurable time. 'Michikusa' annoys adults, because it is something that they can no longer experience. 'Michikusa' is an experience where a person can 'enjoy being within [...] time' (Sato and Valsiner, 2010, p.80). The inherent duration is thus a time that is 'lived' with quality, while measurable time is counted by a clock and valued by adults. 'Michikusa' is all about present time, which adults prioritise less as they consider how to organise their time. To this extent, 'Michikusa' can be seen as a form of 'Thirdspace' in time. Regarding this thesis, then, there is great potential to apply the notion of 'Thirdspace' and *Michikusa* to Juku, where children may enjoy their competence and can find their *Ibasho*, while at the same time satisfying parents'/adults' expectation that they should invest in human capital development and be safe from danger on the street.

3.4 Chapter summary

The present chapter first gave a brief review of the sociology of childhood. Being seen as dependent on adults, children were conventionally absent in public discourse. However, with the recognition of their rights, it has become increasingly common to try to see them as human-beings. Nevertheless, a more recent approach in childhood study by Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Uprichard (2008), Lee (2001) and Prout (2005) suggests the need to see both children and adults as human-*becomings*, and this study follows this conceptualisation of childhood.

When focusing on daily lives from children's perspectives in the Japanese context, there appear to be particular considerations in notions of time and space, namely *Gambaru*, *Ibasho*, *Air* and *Bocci*. Looking into these notions, Japanese childhood appears to operate under significant pressure within personal relationships, which could influence the realisation of the 'self'. Based on existing literature on childhood and the above concepts particular to the Japanese context, this chapter ended with theorising that children in Japan exist interrelationally with other people, being in present and future times simultaneously. Just as the conceptualisation of childhood varied, there have been changes in emphasis placed on the notion of child well-being over time. Thus, the next chapter looks into ongoing discussions of well-being, particularly that of children, and their application to exploring child well-being in Japan.

Chapter 4 Unsettling debate: Well-being and child well-being

4.0 Introduction

Following the previous chapters, this chapter sheds light on the development of the theoretical notions of well-being and child well-being. As Chapter 3 explored, there has been a growing interest in seeing children as human-beings, or human-becomings following the Deleuzian concept. As with the recent development of childhood theories, there are a number of different approaches to consider about well-being. Section 4.1 first looks into theories of well-being and section 4.2 briefly explores those in the Japanese context. Following these, section 4.3 considers well-being in relation to children in particular. Based on existing literature and research, especially those by Ryan, Deci, White and Fattore, section 4.4 develops a theoretical framework with four specific dimensions: agency, self-value, material well-being and security, while at the same time addressing the significance of time and space for children.

4.1 Theories of well-being

Despite growing interest in well-being, there is considerable difficulty in achieving consensus on what ‘well-being’ is, both within and between different theories and concepts. In this section, concepts of well-being in general are explored as a foundation for the discussion of child well-being in later sections.

4.1-1 Well-being

The consideration of ‘well-being’ has progressively become popular over recent decades, with increased attention to its role within policy-contexts, such as the Stiglitz report (White *et al.*, 2012). Nevertheless, there remains difficulty in achieving consensus about its definition, as there could be as many definitions as there are people (White, 2009b, p.3; Gasper, 2004, p.3). This uncertainty regarding the definition is, for the most part, due to the multiplicity of disciplines exploring the issue, such as psychology, economics, education, health, sociology, etc. (Watson *et al.*, 2012). However, some consensus does seem to emerge around the concept of well-being as ‘doing well’, ‘happiness’, ‘good quality of life’, and ‘positive psychology’ (Gasper, 2004; White, 2009a; Watson *et al.*, 2012; Taylor, 2015). ‘Well-being’ often appears to be used when some means are tested in order to evaluate the goodness of a person’s ‘being’ (Gasper, 2002, p.18; 2004, p.3; White, 2009b, p.3).

Nevertheless, ‘well-being’ should be treated with a caution as it is not synonymous with ‘happiness’. Though happiness does act as an important feature of well-being, especially in positive psychology, it reflects only a part of all the aspects of well-being (de Boer *et al.*, 2015).

Broadly speaking, there are two ways in which well-being can be explored: Objective Well-Being (OWB) and Subjective Well-Being (SWB). OWB centres a concern on needs, to which every human being should have access (Phillips, 2006; Gasper, 2004). Some scholars argue that well-being should be measured in terms of objective need-based indicators, and this has been the international trend in measuring well-being until recent years (Forgeard *et al.*, 2011; Bacon *et al.*, 2010). Contrary to OWB, SWB is ‘an individual’s cognitive evaluation of life, the presence of positive emotions, and the lack of negative emotions’ (Diener, 1994; cited in Oishi *et al.*, 1999, p.157). Within these two broad approaches, there are three different approaches to understanding well-being: hedonistic approach, desire theories, and Objective List Theories (OLTs) (Watson *et al.*, 2012; Gasper, 2004). The first two approaches belong to Subjective Well-Being, while the OLTs fit into the notion of Objective Well-Being. The following sections explore these approaches individually.

4.1-2 Subjective Well-Being (SWB)

In terms of Subjective Well-Being, there are three key components: ‘life satisfaction, the presence of frequent pleasant affect, and infrequent unpleasant affect’ (Diener and Suh, 1999). Life satisfaction can be categorised into ‘desire theory’, while ‘the presence of frequent pleasant affect and infrequent unpleasant affect’ can be regarded as the ‘hedonistic’ approach. The ‘hedonistic approach’ in this sense is unequivocal: it concerns what makes peoples’ happiness, and how it could be measured (Parfit, 1984). Desire theory, alternatively eudaimonia, looks at a person’s achievement in her life, marking that the fulfilment of one’s desire leads to satisfaction (Gasper, 2004; Deci and Ryan, 2008; Watson *et al.*, 2012). Deci and Ryan (2008) explore eudaimonia based on Aristotle’s concept of satisfaction in life driven by fulfilment of one’s potential, and argue that it is closely related to the notion of autonomy. Accordingly, Ryan and Deci (*ibid.*, p.6-7) discuss autonomy as one of the most fundamental components in their development of self-determination theory (SDT), along with ‘relatedness and competence’.

Self-determination theory comprises four sub-theories: cognitive evaluation, orgasmic

integration, causality orientations, and basic needs theories. The four sub-theories contribute to self-determination from various perspectives; for example, the extent of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, cultural differences, or the significance of basic needs for one's wellness (Ryan and Deci, 2002). As stated above, SDT is also made up of three essential components that cut across these four theories: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Competence signifies a person's sense of having an opportunity to function to her capacity, and of capacity in interacting with the surrounding social environment (Deci, 1975; in Ryan and Deci, 2002). Second, relatedness refers to the sense of having connection with others, as well as that of being part of a community. Finally, autonomy denotes being in control of one's interests and derived behaviour: expression of oneself leads to experiential behaviour. Ryan and Deci (2002) suggest that the fulfilment of these three components of SDT leads to well-being as well as motivation (Figure 4-1). Gasper (2004), however, criticises this approach, as it is ambiguous what kind of desire should be treated as a point of reference when a level of fulfilment is examined.

Figure 4-1 Self-determination theory (SDT)

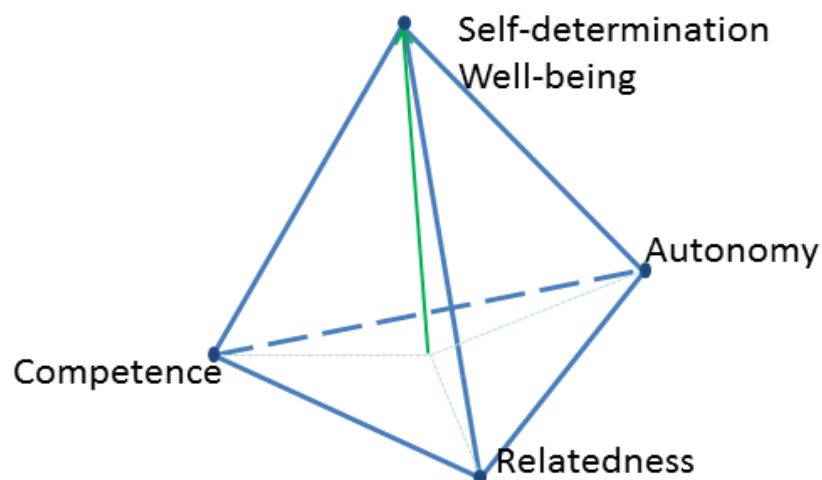


Figure created by the author

It seems that the concept of SWB is straightforward by looking at above components, but there remain several issues. For instance, it is difficult to know how to develop a benchmark to measure 'happiness' or 'pleasantness' (Scanlon, 1993; cited in Gasper, 2004). Furthermore, as it is to do with an individual's subjectivity, the method of measuring the SWB has to rely on a person's self-judgement of their own well-being (Phillips, 2006). Due to the constructivist origin of the concept of well-being, time and space can also largely affect self-reporting, as well as the diverse meanings of well-being (Phillips, 2006; Fattore, 2009). Likewise, White et al. (2012; 2014) criticise approaches to SWB as often narrow and

Western-centric, due to its origin. For this reason, they developed the concept of Inner well-being (IWB) by focusing on the global south. IWB considers ‘what people think and feel they are able to be and do’ (White *et al.*, 2014, p.723), in contrast to the Westernised psychological ideology of SWB. Following the suggestion of the new approach, the authors argue that it is essential to acknowledge cultural, political and economic differences in the world (White *et al.*, 2014).

4.1-3 Objective Well-Being (OWB)

Contrary to SWB frameworks, the objective list theory’s (OLTs) approach employs lists of elements, or ‘substantive good conceptions’ that may constitute well-being (objective well-being [OWB]), which often leads to a list of dimensions, such as material, financial resource, and health (Phillips, 2006). This focus on objective measurement can be seen, for example, in the United Nation’s development of the Human Development Index, which measures GDP, educational achievement and health conditions in countries around the world. There are several studies that suggest similar lists, such as those by Len Doyal, Ian Gough, Amartya Sen, and Martha Nussbaum (Gasper, 2004; Watson *et al.*, 2012).

Among these scholars, the prominent theory around the notion of need is possibly the one proposed by Doyal and Gough in 1991: *Theory of Human Need* (THN). Its basic concept is that ‘[...] all people have a strong right to need satisfaction’ (Gough, 1998, p.52). Their theory centres on the avoidance of ‘harm’, which prevents humans from having basic needs, such as health and autonomy (Forgeard *et al.*, 2011). Humans have an obligation to accomplish duties as a member of society, but they may fail to do so if they lack basic needs. Thus, the THN leads to the consideration of necessity in citizenship in society (Gough, 1998).

Similarly, Amartya Sen (Gough, 1998) proposed an approach based on capabilities in his renowned Tanner Lecture: ‘Equality of What?’ in 1979. In his argument, capability is a grouping of various functionings, which ‘a person may value being or doing’ (Sen, 1999, p.75; Phillips, 2006; Alkire *et al.*, 2008). Sen’s theory focuses on the basic function of the human being in society as a social actor, by assessing what actors are able to pursue or achieve in a certain agency setting choice (Sen, 1985, p.203; cited in Alkire *et al.*, 2008). Though THN and the capability approach seem similar, there is a fundamental difference: THN concerns the provision of goods in the public sphere, while Sen’s approach focuses on ‘freedom of personal choice’ (Stewart, 1996; cited in Phillips, 2006, p.92). This ‘freedom’ is often understood in two formats: opportunity and process freedoms (Sen, 1999; cited in,

Alkire *et al.*, 2008). Put simply, opportunity freedom refers to the capability of a person to have a prospect of achieving something, while process freedom indicates an agency in which things occur in a procedure.

Many argue that Sen's approach is beyond the THN. Nevertheless, there has been substantial criticism: it is difficult to point out what is valuable in the good life, as Sen deliberately left the approach open-ended (Qizilbash, 1998, p.53; cited in,Phillips, 2006, p.93; Robeyns, 2008). Sen did so believing that different lists of capabilities are required to assess different groups of people in diverse contexts (Alkire *et al.*, 2008). Though it may be criticised for its vagueness, there is also an advantage to being open-ended. Robeyns (2008) argues that it is useful for applying to the concerns of different groups, such as for women and children. If the unit of measurement is a family as an institution, women and children are often silenced: the capability approach allows a focus on individual vulnerable actors. Robeyns argues that Sen's capability approach is a framework rather than a theory, and thus requires further theory for 'filling in the gap' (Qizilbash, 2008, p.62).

Following Sen's capabilities approach, a number of scholars, such as Martha Nussbaum and Sabina Alkire, established lists of factors that are required to fulfil capabilities (Phillips, 2006; Gasper, 2004). Nussbaum developed an approach based on universal capabilities by providing a list of well-being which must be satisfied in order to achieve human functionings, such as health and emotions (Phillips, 2006; Gasper, 2004). Alkire (2002) analysed the capability approach by paying particular attention to agency. Alkire refers extensively to John Finnis' work, which pursues 'practical reasons' for people's actions and argues that a choice of factors for a list may consider variation in socio-cultural settings (Alkire, 2002, p.20). Their method of constructing the list has several advantages, as it supports Sen's theory of capability with a list of clear-cut choices, and gives flexibility for interpretation (Gasper, 2004). Nevertheless, in exploring and comparing different theories on well-being, Gasper (*ibid.*) claims that employing solely quantitative measurements of well-being is not appropriate, and that rich qualitative data is also required to promote the well-being of future society.

4.1-4 Summary: Well-being

'Well-being' is a contested notion, which struggles to gather an agreed definition. Though it is challenging to define it, the consensus is that it is about quality of life and people's happiness. Broadly, well-being can be considered in two ways: subjective and objective.

Subjective well-being explores the individual's experience and life satisfaction as well as emotions, as characterised by the Self-Determination Theory. In contrast, objective well-being focuses on the 'economic and material conception' of well-being, of which the most notable ones are the United Nation's Human Development Index and the Theory of Human Need. Following increasing international discourse on well-being, the well-being of children has also come to be considered, and the next section explores the emergence of this concept.

4.2 Child Well-being: general theories and perspectives

Along with the notion of 'well-being', that of 'child well-being' has gained popularity over recent years, due to an increasing demand for evidence-based policy-making (Ben-Arieh, 2008). This is also because children's rights have been recognised internationally with the adoption of the UNCRC in 1989, as explored in Chapter 3 (Ben-Arieh, 2005; Casas, 1997). Just as the definition of 'well-being' is contested, so is that of 'child well-being'. Among the various definitions, this research employs one suggested by Ben-Arieh and Frønes (2007, p.249):

'Child well-being encompasses quality of life in a broad sense. It refers to a child's economic conditions, peer relations, political rights, and opportunities for development. Most studies focus on certain aspects of children's well-being, often emphasising social and cultural variations. Thus, any attempts to grasp well-being in its entirety must use indicators on a variety of aspects of well-being'.

Before reaching this definition, the authors identified four shifts in the conceptualisation of child well-being (Ben-Arieh, 2005). First, children's well-being was focused on their survival, but later shifted to 'beyond survival', because a low mortality rate, for example, does not necessarily correlate with good quality of life. The second shift was the realisation that it is necessary to look at 'positive' factors as well as 'negative' ones (Aber and Jones, 1997; Ben-Arieh, 2005). Avoiding negative factors is still a necessary aspect of children's lives, but by itself is not adequate to measure children's quality of life. Thus, measuring positive aspects is also important. Third was a shift to 'new' subject areas from the 'traditional' ones. This is related to the two changes above, as they require a 'new' conceptualisation of child well-being. Finally, attention shifted from 'well-becoming' to 'well-being'. This is the same transition seen in the sociology of childhood (see Chapter 3 section 3.1), from the future-oriented being of children to the present one.

Child well-being researchers argue that studying child well-being requires an alternative

epistemological standpoint from that used in general well-being research, in order to put children at the centre of focus (Fattore *et al.*, 2007; Hood, 2007). For example, indicators on education are always included in measurements of child well-being, but they merely show the academic achievement of children rather than how they see their education (Fattore *et al.*, 2007). To this extent, children are seen only as a means constituting the measurement, rather than as social actors: children's social engagement is ignored in the measuring process. Additionally, another common indicator is the extent of problematic behaviours. The implication here is that the less problematic behaviours there are, the more positive the state of childhood is. However, the lack of negative aspects does not necessarily associate with a larger number of positive aspects of life as Ben-Arieh emphasised (2005). Again, there could be a difference between what adults expect from the data and how children may make sense of their well-being, which is yet to be known. Hence, putting children at the centre of well-being exploration still remains a tremendous challenge.

Despite persistent difficulties in the various approaches to the issue, there have been several significant international researches conducted on child well-being, such as UNICEF's (2007, 2013b, a) 'Report Card 7' and 'Report Card 11' and the OECD's (2009) 'Doing Better for Children'. UNICEF's reports (2007, p.2-3; 2013b) value similar aspects to articles in the UNCRC, stressing the importance of child well-being, and providing datasets with national statistics. In these reports, child well-being in Japan is measured separately from other international comparisons because of a lack of comparable data (UNICEF, 2013a). The OECD (2009) argues that there are two ways to define child well-being: multi-dimensional and subjective approaches. For the multi-dimensional approach, the OECD refers to Ben-Arieh and Frønes' (2007, p.1) definition, stressing the importance of various aspects in children's lives. The multi-dimensional approach, in this sense, is equivalent to the Objective List Theories' (OLTs) approach. The subjective approach, on the other hand, involves directly asking children their perspectives on their own well-being. This approach would allow the exploration of children's own views of their lives with their own voices. It would provide in-depth knowledge of their world and well-being, though with some limitations, such as children's ability to express their views and to answer the questions of the researchers. The subjective data is also often difficult to apply to policy-making on child well-being. Between the two, the OECD employs a multi-dimensional approach, as it considers subjective data is not able to influence policy-making.

Based on Ben-Arieh and Frønes' (2007, p.1) definition and the UNCRC, both organisations present six dimensions to measure child well-being. It is worth noting, however, that UNICEF reduced the number of dimensions to five in the second report (Report Card 11), in order to separate subjective well-being from the other factors. Both organisations' well-being dimensions also show resemblance to that of Bradshaw et al.'s (2007) work, which presents an index to measure child well-being at the European level. Largely following the UNCRC, Bradshaw and colleagues take a rights-based approach, where they consider well-being as:

The realisation of children's rights and the fulfilment of the opportunity for every child to be all she or he can be. The degree to which this is achieved can be measured in terms of positive child outcomes, whereas negative outcomes and deprivation point to the denial of children's rights (Bradshaw et al., 2007, p.135).

From these, it appears that there is a considerable consensus in valuing 'material well-being', 'health and safety', 'behaviours and risks' and 'education' although there is a variation in dimensions (Table 4-1). The study carried out by the OECD differs slightly, as it includes children's well-being specifically relating to their school life. This point is notable, as most of the children in the industrial world spend the majority of their time at school during the day, which plays an important part of their lives. Bradshaw et al.'s study (2007) is also significant for including children's civic participation, which corresponds to the UNCRC's recognition of children's political participation in society.

Table 4-1 Comparison of dimensions

UNICEF (RC7)	Material well-being	Health and safety	Education	Behaviours and risks	Peer and family relationships		Young people's own subjective sense of well-being	
UNICEF (RC11)	Material well-being	Health and safety	Education	Behaviours and risks		Housing and environment	What children say *not included in overall well-being	
OECD	Material well-being	Health	Educational outcome	Risk behaviours		Housing and environment	Quality of school life (subjective aspect)	
Bradshaw et al.	Material well-being	Health	Education	Risk and safety	Children's relationships	Housing	Subjective well-being	Civic participation

Sources: UNICEF (2007) Report Card 7,

OECD (2009) Doing Better for Children,

Bradshaw et al. (2007) Index of Child Well-Being in the European Union

The OECD (2009, p.25) also suggests two perspectives to look at when considering child well-being: 'developmentalist' and 'rights-based' perspectives. The 'developmentalist' perspective is essentially equivalent to the socialisation theory, positioning children as human-becomings. When it is applied to discussions of well-being, it thus focuses on the child's future 'well-becoming' rather than 'well-being'. The 'rights-based' perspective, on the contrary, follows the UNCRC and the new sociology of childhood, attempting to look at child well-being by recognising children as human beings with their own rights. Ben-Arieh and Frønes (2011), however, criticise this distinction between the present and future being of children, as childhood consists of both present and future. To this extent, their argument resembles that of Lee (2001), Prout (2005), and Uprichard (2008), emphasising the importance of looking at child well-being inclusive of both present and future.

The above sections have examined child well-being from the perspective of a large-scale consideration, but its exploration can take place on several different levels, such as the macro-, meso- and micro-levels, as children's well-being, especially that of adolescents, should be considered in relation to the individual as well as the context in which the person is situated (Bedin and Sarriera, 2014). In terms of the macro-level of observation, research by large organisations such as UNICEF, the OECD and the European Union are good examples. As was seen above, they share an interest in measuring child well-being but there is variation in the approaches they take. UNICEF's approach follows the UNCRC; in other words, a rights-based approach. The OECD also follows the UNCRC but is more

developmentalist, focusing on policy-responsive measures to explore child well-being. The OECD considers that child policy needs to be developed further by recognising that children have a long future. It is not that the OECD does not value the current state of childhood, but in order to focus on policy impact it seems to give more weight to children's future lives. The European Union's focus on child well-being began as part of policy monitoring among member countries (Open Method of Coordination: OMC). The focal points of its dimensions are similar to those of the OECD, with an emphasis on achieving social inclusion. Bradshaw et al.'s approach to child well-being is also developmentalist, centring on the social investment perspective (European Commission, 2008).

At the meso-level, the United Kingdom (UK), for example, has been active in exploring the well-being of children. The UK's strategy to monitor child well-being is derived from issues relating to child poverty (European Commission, 2008). Child poverty was recognised in the UK as a social exclusion issue, and became a focus for the New Labour government between 1997 and 2010. Within this period, various kinds of child-related policies and plans were implemented, such as 'Every Child Matters', 'Children's Plan' and 'Opportunity for all', which monitored the country's poverty and social exclusion, and within which children were one of the focuses (Bradshaw, 2002; Department of Social Security, 1999). The 'Opportunity for all' annual report promoted better education for children, attempted to fight against family poverty and monitored the government's anti-child poverty strategy using 15 indicators (Department of Social Security, 1999). New Labour's overall approach for implementing policies was risk-avoidance, rather than resolving existing social issues. Additionally, UNICEF's 2007 report card placed children's well-being in the UK at the bottom compared to other countries, and pressured the government to implement further policies to improve child well-being. As Chapter 3 (section 3.1-1) explored in relation to the sociology of childhood, many policies were implemented as a means of social investment (Lister, 2003). To this extent, the UK's approach to child well-being is also developmentalist.

In terms of the micro-level, the Children's Society, the British-based charity organisation, monitors the state of child well-being to help society value the lives of children (The Children's Society, 2012). Their focus is mainly on England, although some data includes other countries within the UK. The Children's Society's annual report explores children's subjective well-being using quantitative indicators. Another example, Sixsmith et al. (2007), explores aspects of children's well-being from the perspectives of children, parents and

teachers in four schools in Ireland. The aim of the research was to compare perceptions of child well-being between these three groups. The findings revealed that there is a clear difference. This research shows the ultimate need to explore children's own perceptions of their well-being, rather than considering the issue through the eyes of adults.

These points on the micro-, meso- and macro-levels of child well-being mirror the ecology model suggested by Bronfenbrenner (1979). Rees et al. (2013) utilise this model to consider and evaluate child well-being. They discuss how various factors at different levels, from national policy to children themselves, can influence child well-being. By conducting a survey with children and young people aged 10 to 17, the authors suggest that national policy could be effective in improving children's well-being by promoting societal changes. Considering child well-being at the level of local authorities can also be effective in enhancing children's lives. Thirdly, clarifying problems surrounding individuals can be an informative intervention to achieve children's well-being. Finally, Rees et al. discuss that children themselves have an ability to promote their own well-being by, for example, connecting with other people and being active. Overall, the authors highlight the need to consider child well-being at various levels of society.

4.2-1 Child well-being, space, and time

Similarly to the sociology of childhood and the notion of space and time, Ben-Arieh and Frønes (2011) emphasise the significance of time, arguing that child well-being can vary during the course of childhood. The UNCRC considers 'childhood' to last up to the age of 18 (United Nations, 1989), but the factors that enable good well-being at one age do not necessarily lead to the same level of well-being at another. Thus, it is essential to understand that children's present circumstances can affect their future well-being and different frameworks are required to look at different ages within childhood rather than looking at it holistically (Ben-Arieh and Frønes, 2011).

By recognising the importance of time, Ben-Arieh and Frønes (2011) suggest employing Sen's capability approach to explore child well-being:

'Children's movements through life produce new contexts, assigning new values to resources and commodities. Socialisation and development is understood not only as the evolving of capacities but as the evolving of capabilities' (p. 464).

This approach has advantages, as child well-being is multi-dimensional both in time and space and, as Sen (1993) proposed, open-endedness allows scholars to build indicators of child well-being. Children may also have a different perception of well-being according to space. In one space they may have positive feeling, while in another it may not be the case. For instance, a child may feel happy at school, but may feel unhappy at Juku and vice versa. Hence, children's well-being is important both at the societal and individual levels, and in their present and future. Additionally, because they are essentially in a passive position regarding material well-being, solely looking at material aspect; for example, family income, does not necessarily lead to a good observation of their overall well-being, and thus child well-being needs to be explored subjectively as well (Ben-Arieh and Frønes, 2011; Robeyns, 2008).

To highlight these points, it is worth noting Watson and et al.'s (2012) study, which focuses on children's social and emotional well-being (SEWB) by listening to minority voices and considering broad perspectives, particularly in the context of school. In their book *Children's social and emotional wellbeing in schools*, the concept of well-being is deconstructed with Deleuze and Guattari's *rhizomatic* approach (1987) (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-4). In this sense, the authors see child well-being as an assemblage that is situated in individual and social lives complexly, and as associated with daily encounters that constitute 'intersubjectivity' and 'inter-relationality': it is not bound to individual perception (Watson *et al.*, 2012, p.224). This argument is supported by the authors' exploration of three propositions: 'SEWB is *subjectively experienced, contextual and embedded, and relational*' (Watson *et al.*, 2012, p.7-8, p. 222-223). The first proposition of well-being as 'subjectively experienced' advocates that a body (without organs) is not bounded but is relational becoming and composed of other bodies, such as surrounding networks (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-4). In relation to this, the second proposition stresses the contextual nature of well-being. It does not arise from inside the body, but is realised within societal, political and cultural circumstances. Finally, the third proposition is concerned with the understanding of well-being as constructed with 'a set of circumstances and encounters' (Watson *et al.*, 2012, p.8).

By clarifying these propositions, Watson and colleagues argue that well-being is a relational, embodied, and phenomenological experience, rather than something that a bounded individual achieves. To stress this, the authors discuss different kinds of bodies by

referring to the work of Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987): the phenomenological lived body, the social body and the body politic. These three bodies can also be understood in relation to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecology model, which extends from micro-, meso- and exo-systems respectively. The phenomenological lived body focuses on children's experiences in the micro-level, while the body politic considers on a large scale where and how policies can intervene to promote child well-being. To understand well-being in this way, we also need to recognise that child well-being includes their 'positive experiences of 'being', 'becoming', and 'belonging'' (Woodill *et al.*, 1994, p.69; in Watson *et al.*, 2012, p.109, 223). Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) conclude that the approach taken to explore well-being in school and to develop education policy still seems to be derived from adult perspectives. In order to overcome this, the authors stress the need for children's engagement in the process of understanding well-being beyond hearing their voices. The next section explores well-being and child well-being in the Japanese context.

4.3 Well-being and child well-being in the Japanese context

As noted above, 'well-being' has become a popular topic in the international context. In Japan, a focus on well-being has emerged more recently than in Western countries. This trend can be observed from some discourses in Japanese government papers, which suggest international pressure to consider child well-being, and the government's support for the Istanbul Declaration in 2007 (Cabinet Office, 2011c; OECD, 2007). The Istanbul Declaration is an agreed commitment made in the World Forum in 2007, signed by the OECD, the World Bank, the United Nations (UN), the UN Development Programme and the European Commission (OECD, 2007). It stresses that the existing indicators of well-being, which are largely based on GDP, are insufficient to monitor countries' progress. Thus, the institutions that signed this declaration ought to measure countries' development in multiple dimensions (European Commission, 2007). In fact, 'well-being' became a concern for the Japanese government with the New Growth Strategy (Shin-Seichou Senryaku) in 2010 (Tsuji, 2010). This strategy aims to achieve a 'strong economy', 'strong public finance', and 'strong social security'. In essence, the government claims to establish the 'Third Way', for which prominent examples are Clinton's government in the United States and Blair's government in the UK, and a scholarly book by Anthony Giddens (Romano, 2006). In order to achieve the establishment of a Third Way and implement effective policies, the government claims that measuring well-being (happiness) is an important part of evidence-based policy making (Cabinet Office, 2010). Perceptions of 'well-being' can be different

according to different cultures. However, much of the existing literature on well-being seems to be based on Western culture, and there is little well-established literature or consensus on ‘well-being in a Japanese context’.

In an attempt to establish indicators to measure well-being following the Istanbul Declaration, the Commission on Measuring Well-Being (CMW) in the Cabinet Office (2011a) published a proposal on indicators of well-being. On the very first line, it states that ‘parents wish their children to “live a happy life” when they are born’ (Commission on Measuring Well-being, 2011, p.4), which indicates their recognition that children’s well-being needs to be fostered. The proposal acknowledges that Japan is rated lower than average in UNICEF’s Happiness Index, especially with regard to a high percentage of students aged 15 who agree with the statement “I feel lonely” (which echoes the notion of *Bocci* in Chapter 3 section 3.2-2) (2007), and a high suicide rate among children and young people (Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare, 2010). Additionally, the proposal points out that Japan is suffering from a Happiness Paradox, which occurs when well-being does not increase even when material wealth increases (Pugno, 2005).

In order to make effective evidence-based policies to improve the well-being of people in Japan, the Commission proposed a three-pillar framework to investigate well-being: economic and societal circumstances, physical and psychological health, and relationships. The Commission supplemented these three pillars with ‘sustainability’, as no one should be a burden on others’ happiness in different times and spaces (Commission on Measuring Well-being, 2011). Under these pillars there are 132 indicators, covering multi-dimensional well-being in the Japanese context. Unfortunately, however, the discourse of well-being has diminished in policy documents since the change of leading political party in 2012, from the Democratic Party of Japan to the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan. Nevertheless, the initiative to explore and measure well-being remains valuable, and the ‘Japan Quality of Life Survey’ continues to take place annually. The survey includes people aged between 15 and 69, but young people (aged 15 to 19) represent only around 2% of total samples.

There has been an increase in concerns over children’s lives in Japan; for example, public discourses frequently appear to discuss ‘troubled children’ (MEXT, Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology). Hasegawa (2008) and Hijikata (2010) suggest that children and young people are increasingly finding suffering in their lives. Such a trend can be seen from keywords such as truancy (*futoukou*) and *hikikomori* (withdrawal from society).

According to governmental statistics, one in forty junior high school students are categorised by *futoukou* (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2009). Furthermore, it is often said that children ‘snap’ or *kireru* (Kiyokawa, 2003). ‘*Kireru*’ signifies sudden anger in the general sense. Nakanishi (2008), however, suggests that it is not as simple as this, but is something more complicated. Nakanishi explains that ‘*kireru*’ is often used when people engage in ‘sudden delinquency’ although they are calm and steady in their normal daily lives. In such a situation, people around would not know what made them engage in such delinquency. Discussing this, Nakanishi stresses that these days, young people are required to ‘act’ normally and control some of their characteristics that may not fit into general society, and to be patient. In this sense, children have to ‘build’ their characteristics, and by doing so they also raise the expectations of others. They build their own self to fit into society *for other people* to feel comfortable around them, and they want those others to ‘fit’ in a way that they expect as well. This mirrors to the notion of agency in the Japanese context that was explored in Chapter 3 section 3.1-2. However, when such expectations are not met and such events occur several times, children enter a state of ‘I cannot stand [it] anymore’. Nakanishi (2008) argues that this is the state of *kireru*. It is also said that children no longer feel guilt for having committed any crime as much as they should (Ohishi, 1999). The state of troubled children can also be seen from the number of them who are school-phobic and do not, or cannot, attend school (*futoukou*) (Kiyokawa, 2003).

Additionally, children and young people can be victims of trouble rather than being agents. Looking at the data on reported offences against children, it is evident that children, especially girls, are prone to danger (Table 4-2)(Directorate General for Policies on Cohesive Society, 2014a). For example, 92% (1044 cases) of the total record of assaults on children aged between six and twelve were on girls. The phenomenon is even worse among teenagers, where 98% of the victims of assaults are girls, compared with just 2% of boy victims. Looking at these statistics, it is clear that there are some issues with the state of childhood in Japan.

Table 4-2 Number of reported obscenity offences by age and gender (in 2012)

	Total number of people harmed (0-39 year-olds)		0-5years old		6-12 years old		13-19 years old	
		Women		Girls		Girls		Girls
Assault	8278	8029 (97%)	55	49 (89%)	1137	1044 (92%)	3082	3028 (98%)
Indecency through compulsion	7263	7087	55	49	999	911	2737	2692
Public Indecency	1015	942	0	0	138	133	345	336

(Directorate General for Policies on Cohesive Society, 2014a)

Last, but not least, as explained in Chapter 2 section 2.3-2, children appear to spend a large amount of time engaging in extracurricular activities, such as Juku, in addition to daily schooling. Though evidence is lacking, it can be suggested that Juku children live under considerable pressure. Considering these circumstances affecting children, it is essential to look into their well-being. The next section develops the theoretical framework that will be used to explore child well-being in this study.

4.4 Theoretical framework

If children's perceptions of well-being are to be genuinely explored with their voice, it should be investigated with no preconceptions, but by asking them an open-approach question to 'well-being'. Sen's capability approach is useful as it recognises variation in societal and individual differences, and understands that people's wellness (capability) can depend on specific contexts. Nothing is identified as a valuable thing in people's lives by Sen, which is both commendable and criticised. Putting children at the centre of research according to Sen's approach could be the most appropriate method, but it is also helpful to have some structure by which to lay the foundations of the research. The theoretical framework here is developed in conjunction with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), White's Three-Dimensional framework (2009a) and Fattore et al.'s Model of children's well-being (2009). SDT was briefly explored above, thus White's three dimensional framework and Fattore et al.'s model of children's well-being will be discussed in this section, leading to the development of a theoretical framework. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that agency, which is one of the components in SDT, does not function in Japan in same way as in the Western culture where SDT originated from. As was explored in Chapter 3 section 3.1-2, agency in the Japanese context is conjoint and interdependent, in contrast to disjoint and independent agency in the West. This variation in cultural contexts has been one of the criticisms of Ryan and Deci's work, to which they have responded. They

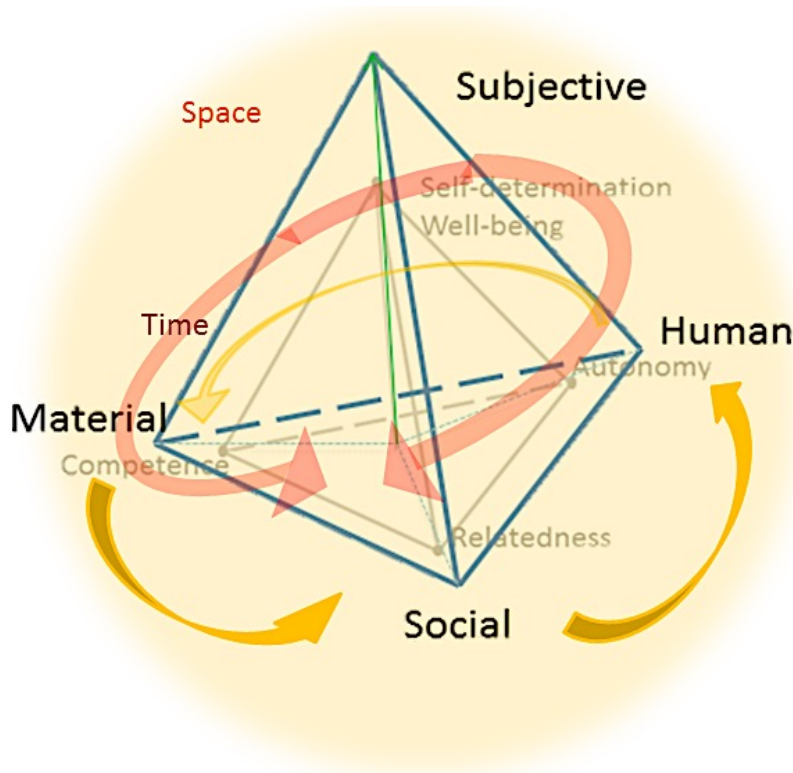
confirm that it is important to consider cultural variation when considering SDT, particularly in relation to autonomy ('agency' in this study). However, citing numerous studies conducted by other researchers, they maintain that cultural variation does not have great significance when autonomy is considered in the context of SDT. Thus, this study follows SDT but with the caution that the meaning and function of autonomy (agency) could vary between different cultures.

4.4-1 Three-dimensional framework

Sarah White et al. at the Centre for Well-being in Developing Countries (WeD) at the University of Bath developed an analytical framework for well-being (White, 2009a). Based on the studies conducted by WeD, White emphasises that relationships are essential in exploring well-being; for example, with family, friends and community. Past research by the WeD also suggests that subjective values vary depending on the context in which people are placed. Furthermore, even if material resources can be measured with the same unit, such as GDP and household income, its meaning can differ from place to place; for example, from urban to rural areas, and from industrial to agricultural countries. To this extent, cultural and social contexts have a large impact on people's values.

With these aspects in mind, the WeD and White suggest an approach that employs three dimensions: 'the material, the relational, and the subjective' (White, 2009a, p.161). 'Material' refers to standards of living and welfare, while 'relational' refers to two aspects: 'social' and 'human'. 'Social' concerns the social relationships that people have with others, as well as their right to use public goods. 'Human', on the other hand, refers more to people's internal beings, such as their capabilities, individual relationships with others, and attitude to life. These three [material, social and human] comprise the final dimension, the subjective. The subjective can also be seen in two ways: one's perception of her position in society, and the cultural ideals and values that the person holds. Having considered these dimensions, the WeD and White (2009a) propose a 3-Dimensional form of conceptualisation, picturing well-being in the shape of a pyramid (Figure 4-2). At the bottom, the material, the social, and the human form a triangle. These three put together produce subjective well-being, represented at the vertex. This composition of triangles shows the interdependence of each of the domains and their interplay, stressing the importance of looking at the subjective account of well-being without separating the objective aspects.

Figure 4-2 Analytical framework of well-being (White, 2009a)



Note: Grey-scale pyramid shows SDT suggested by Ryan and Deci (2002).

Considering this framework closely, it shows significant resemblance to how self-determination theory (SDT) is conceptualised above in Figure 4-1, which is drawn in grey scale in Figure 4-2. According to self-determination theory, competence, autonomy and relatedness comprise self-determination well-being. The relatedness aspect of well-being is considered as equal to that of social relations by the WeD, while competence is equal to human relations. As for autonomy (agency) and material, there are no overlaps, but autonomy can be considered part of relatedness. In this sense, material is the only aspect that does not appear in self-determination theory, but this difference is inevitable, as SDT is a framework for exploring a person's inner ability and eudaimonic motivation.

In addition to the development of this framework, White (2009a) draws attention to notions of time and space. Subjective accounts of people's perception depend on various factors, such as life events, place and time. Because it is ambiguous and not something people encounter or do, there is a need to understand well-being as a 'process', in which people make sense with meaning. The yellow arrows in Figure 4-2 represent the interrelations of different dimensions, while the red one shows time. White suggests that the notion of well-being or how people perceive life to be 'good' differs across history, as well as generations. Depending on the past or present, people's future prospects may change and

vice versa. Last but not least, the pink circle around the pyramid represents space. Perceptions on well-being that people hold depend heavily on where he or she is in terms of geographical location and space, although the notion of space can also vary between people. Though there may be variability, recognising ‘space’ allows the further exploration of well-being.

This framework is in part based on Sen’s study of human development, which focuses on people’s functionings, valuing the person’s beings and doings (Sumner, 2010). Though the development of this framework is based on research in developing countries, it is nevertheless useful in any context, from developing to developed countries, agricultural to industrial cultures, and across different ethnicities. This three-dimensional well-being framework also seems suitable to apply to children. As was explored in the theories of childhood studies, children’s voices are rarely heard, and if their statuses are explored it is through the eyes of adult-related indicators, such as household income and living conditions (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-1). Sumner and Jones (2011) applied this across the text of the UNCRC (Table 4-3), suggesting that different dimensions of well-being are made clear in the convention, which also makes it easy to apply to a 3D framework. In addition, by recognising that children are human-beings, their autonomy should be acknowledged, and this framework recognises this perfectly.

Table 4-3 UNCRC and Child well-being

	Material well-being	Relational well-being	Subjective well-being
UNCRC	Child survival (nutrition, health, and water and sanitation) (6, 24, 27)*	Child participation (in community decisions that affect children’s lives) (12, 13, 31)	Child psychological and emotional development (13, 14, 28, 29)
	Child development (education and psychological development) (6, 28, 29)	Child protection (from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect) (19, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37)	Child participation (12, 13, 31) and child protection (19, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37)

* Numbers in brackets refer to article numbers in the UNCRC

(Jones and Sumner, 2008; Jones and Sumner, 2011)

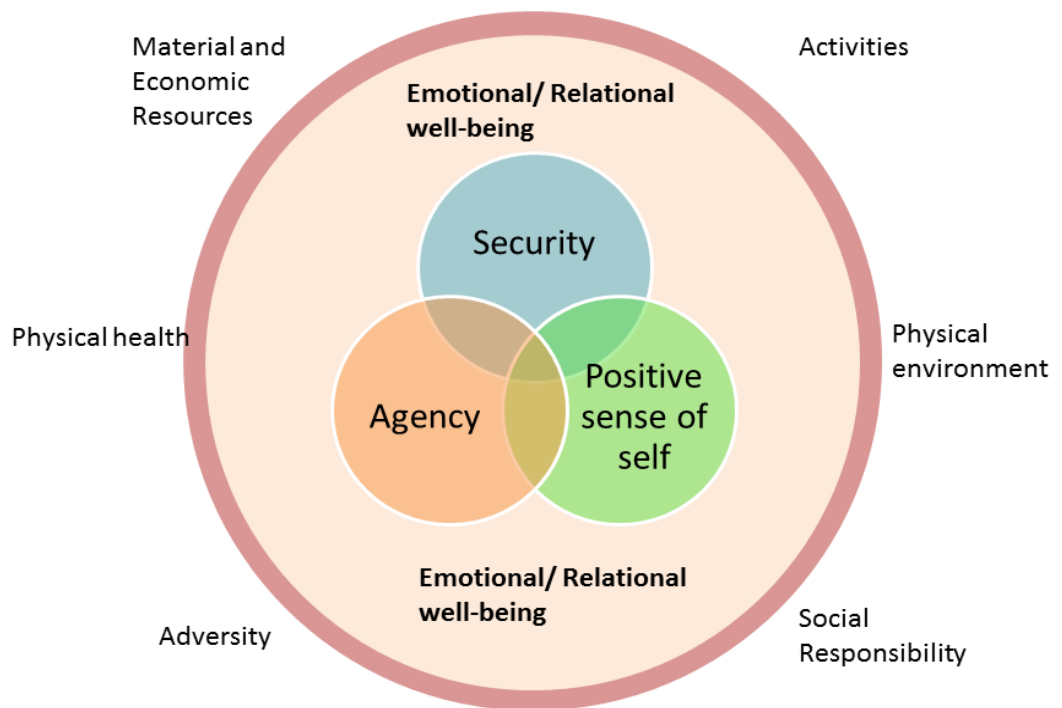
Furthermore, the extent to which the 3D framework presents SWB as interactive to OWB, and its applicability to different times and space are noteworthy. As mentioned above, there is a need to recognise variety in time and space (White, 2009a). Studies of childhood have

traditionally focused on home, school and street as distinctive spaces for children. Consideration of children living only in those three spaces is out-dated, as the transport system and information technology have greatly expanded 'space' for people generally. For example, about 25% of Japanese Grade 6 students have mobile phones, increasing to around 96% for second-year high school students (Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology, 2009b). A very high proportion of children own mobile phones, and considering that this data is from 2009, it can be assumed that even more children now have mobile phones. To this extent, there may be more variation in notions of space for children than when adults were children previously. Tsutsui (2001) further suggests that the media has created an alternative world for children away from reality. The meaning that physical existence holds becomes ambiguous, and that may affect how children perceive their 'space'.

4.4-2 Model of children's well-being

As for developing a model of children's well-being, Fattore et al. (2007; 2009, 2012) conducted studies asking children in New South Wales in Australia how they made sense of their well-being. This research was carried out using a qualitative approach, and it identified emerging themes as well as children's own concepts of well-being. Figure 4-3 shows the level of conceptualisation they reached. The children stress the importance of 'relationships' and 'emotional life', which constitute an overarching theme for the concept of well-being. Within this theme, the authors identify three key dimensions – 'agency', 'security' and 'positive sense of self' – that constitute large parts of the notion of child well-being (Fattore, 2009). Though the core theme and dimensions appear to be of primary importance, there is also some consensus as to what may contribute to well-being, such as material and economic resources, situated outside the circle in Figure 4-3. As a result of the research, the authors concluded that for children the notion of well-being is related to 'their emotional lives', while adults tend to include multiple dimensions (Fattore, 2009, p.75). The authors' methodology is interesting in that they attempted to depart from the positivist approach to well-being research and situated children at its centre. This method is discussed in more detail in the methodology chapter (Chapter 5).

Figure 4-3 Model of children's well-being



(Fattore, 2009)

The core theme of ‘emotional life and relationships’ acts as a research lens through which the overall notion of well-being is explored. This core theme emerged not as an individual dimension isolated from other ones, but as an associative factor. For example, material well-being is valued in terms of how children themselves emotionally feel about it rather than the level of household income, and their sense of security is affected by the quality of relationships they feel they have with other people, etc. Additionally, by treating emotional life and relationships as an overarching theme, the authors concluded that children’s perception of well-being complexly integrates different aspects of life, not merely focusing on positivity and happiness, but also negativity, negotiation and resilience (Fattore, 2009). The core theme allowed the authors to see well-being as process as well as an outcome. In the course of the research, children shared an idea that well-being is something to be negotiated, rather than to be achieved. Thus, the sense of well-being that they build on their past experiences is equally important to how they strive to achieve it.

In terms of the other core dimensions, each dimension in the circle of emotional life and relationships do not act separately, but are closely interrelated (Figure 4-3). As for a positive

sense of self, this relates to how a child feels that they are ‘good person’, which may derive from others recognising them positively, and about whether they are ‘okay’ or their lives being ‘all right’ rather than formally achieving something. The notion of agency is about children’s ability to have a certain level of control and ability to influence something. Evidently, children cannot have total control over their lives as they still need to be protected by adults, but agency is about making decisions and negotiating with adults. A sense of involvement in decision-making seems to contribute to higher level of their well-being. Finally, security and safety matter for children to be able to fully engage with their lives. Fattore et al. (2009) argue that this is not merely about the actual level of safety, but about the trust that children have in the adults around them: thus it is about both physical and emotional safety.

4.4-3 Developing a theoretical framework

In this section, the three fundamental studies are brought together to develop the theoretical framework of this research. There appear to be large resemblances between the above three theories (Table 4-4). There are at least two overlaps aside from emotional life and relationships, which are positioned as themes rather than dimensions in Fattore et al.’s work (2009). Relatedness, or relationship, certainly does seem to have a significant role in investigating people’s well-being, particularly for children. Autonomy and competence also seem to have a considerable weight in assessments of well-being, looking at prosperity and sense of achievement, as well as control over decision making.

Table 4-4 Comparison of theories

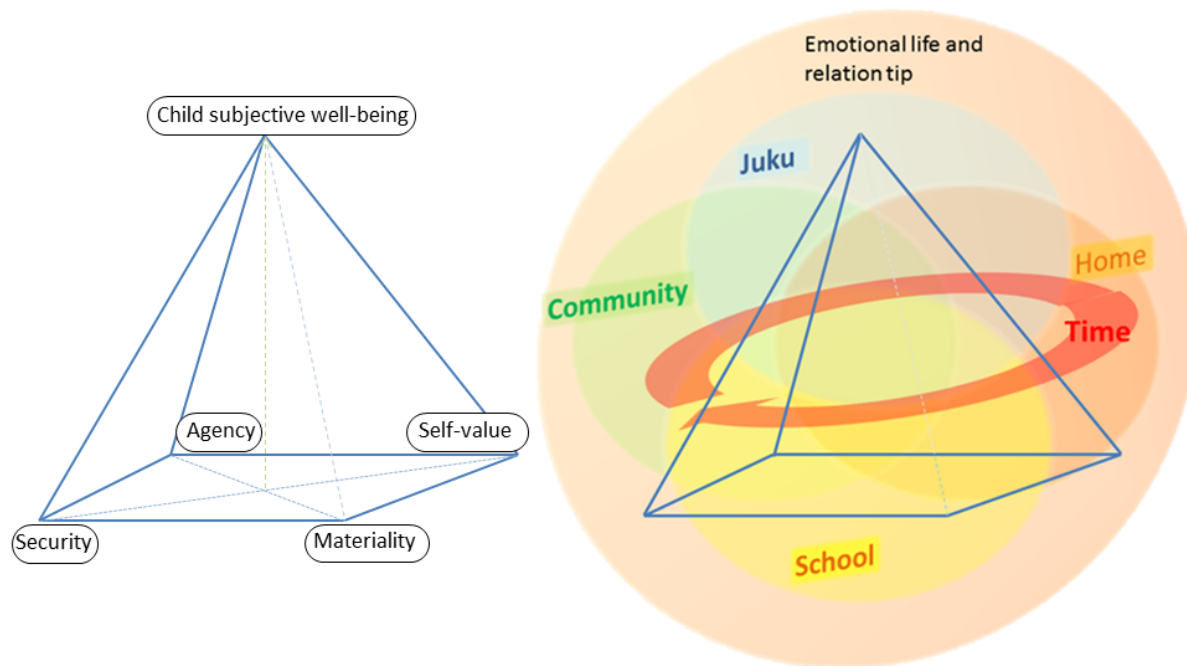
Theory	Self-Determination Theory	Three-dimensional	Model of children’s well-being
	Competence		Positive sense of self
	Autonomy	Human (in Relational)	Agency
	Relatedness	Social (in Relational)	
		Material	Security

Finally, security and material are quite different aspects of well-being from inner wellness. Security is important in exploring well-being, especially when it comes to individualised urban areas. Children should not live in fear, and it could also be useful to see the extent of bullying at school. If there is always a possibility of getting bullied, a child’s life is not particularly ‘secure’. Thus, the notion of security can be considered as important not only

for being protected from strangers but also from surrounding people. In terms of material goods, White's (2009a) study is developed to apply to the exploration of well-being in developing countries. The extent of material need thus may not be relevant to industrialised countries. However, it can be explored in terms of relativity. As discussed in the context chapter (see Chapter 2 section 2.2), meritocracy is now driven by family wealth rather than children's ability. Juku education can therefore be considered as a form of consumption. To this extent, it can be considered that the notion of material need is relevant in exploring well-being, especially in relation to Juku education. However, as this thesis explores children's perception of their material well-being, 'material' is referred to as 'materiality' in order to recognise the difference in objective and subjective accounts of material needs. Based on this comparison, four dimensions are chosen with relatedness as the overarching theme: competence, agency, security and materiality.

Figure 4-4 (below left) shows the 3D framework applied to the purpose of this thesis. The 3D figure takes the form of pyramid, each apex representing an aspect of well-being gathered from three different studies: self-value (competence), agency (autonomy), security and materiality. Autonomy for children is, as discussed above, referred to as 'agency' in this thesis, considering that negotiation is required for their autonomy to be functional. The notion of competence suggested by Ryan and Deci (2002) is understood as 'self-value' in this thesis in order to clearly differentiate between autonomy and competence. In the child study literatures, 'competence' seems to be referred to a synonym to 'autonomy'; for example, competent being and autonomous being. In SDT, competence is understood as a person's experience in increasing his or her capability (Levesque *et al.*, 2004) and thus it can be considered as useful to rephrase it to 'self-value' so that it will be understandable for children. The level of children's subjective well-being depends on the extent of each aspect, working up from the bottom to the summit of the pyramid.

Figure 4-4 Theoretical Framework



The figure on the right places this pyramid within the notions of relationship, space and time. The small circles represent physical spaces that can be of particular focus in this research: home, school, community and Juku. These are flexible, but these four places are of particular focus because they appear to have significance in children's lives (James *et al.*, 1998)(see Chapter 3 section 3.2-2). In terms of time, not only adults but also children live in a continuous loop of past, present and future. The present may be drawn in a linear line, but with the continuous occurrence of past and future (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1). Children's past experiences may influence their present activity, but at the same time their future prospects may do the same. Hence, the timeline may not be as linear as it looks in Figure 4-4, where it is shown with a red arrow, but it is certainly an important consideration in looking at children's well-being. All these aspects of different dimensions, space and time are put together under the overall theme of emotional life and relationships, which children seem to connect to their well-being.

4.4-4 Summary: Theoretical framework

This section has developed the theoretical framework to study the extent of child well-being in Japan in relation to Juku. White *et al.* developed a three-dimensional conceptualisation of well-being with three distinctive aspects: material, relational and subjective well-being. This study is also valuable in recognising the importance of time and space to perceptions of well-being. In the work of Fattore *et al.*, relationships and emotional

life appear to be an overarching theme that capture aspects of well-being, and within it three fundamental dimensions are identified: agency, security and a positive sense of self.

Applying Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the three-dimensional framework and the model of children's well-being, which had similarities in the dimensions chosen to explore well-being, four dimensions are chosen for the theoretical framework: 'agency', 'self-value', 'materiality' and 'security', all comprising overall subjective well-being. Space and time are also considered, situated in the overall theme of relationships and emotional life.

4.5 Chapter 4 summary

This chapter explored theories of well-being and child well-being. The concept of well-being is highly contested, and there is difficulty in generating consensus on what it might mean. Broadly, there are two ways to approach well-being, such as subjective and objective, which also influence each other. When the notion of well-being is applied to children, changes in the approach are required to make it compatible to notions of childhood. As the focus of child sociology shifted from human-becoming to human-being and beyond, so did children's well-becoming to well-being. There are numerous studies on well-being and child well-being, but the Self-Determination Theory, the three-dimensional theory and the Model of children's well-being are chosen in this study to develop the theoretical framework. The resulting framework comprises 'agency', 'self-value', 'security' and 'materiality'. It is also important to recognise that well-being is treated as a process, and takes place in different spaces and times under the overarching theme of relationships.

Chapter 5 Methodology

5.0 Introduction

Chapters two to four explored existing knowledge about the context of Japanese education, Juku, childhood, well-being and child well-being. Past research shows that Juku have been studied quantitatively, and it has been effective to present some aspects of Juku education that are similar to business. However, a quantitative approach can hardly explore children's lives and experiences from their perspectives. In this respect, Iwase's (2006c; 2006a; 2006b) ethnographic works in the Juku context are unique (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-6). As for the study of well-being, there have been a number of studies on happiness and life satisfaction from both clinical and psychological perspectives. Likewise, the Cabinet Office in Japan (2011b) has been conducting life satisfaction surveys, but 'well-being' as a discourse in Japanese society is still in its infancy (see Chapter 4 section 4.3). Aside from studies on Juku and well-being, research *with* rather than *on* children is still scarce in Japan. To these points, there are clear needs to explore children's life experiences at Juku from their perspectives, and also to explore how they make sense of their well-being in general. With this in mind, this chapter presents the methodology to answer the research questions which are developed as follow.

How do children perceive Juku attendance in relation to their life and well-being in urban Japan?

1. What are the key factors contributing to children's relational well-being in Japan?
2. How does Juku attendance influence children's well-being in Japan and how does this differ over time?

The chapter begins with section 5.1 exploring the child-centred research paradigm, 'relational being' constructionist ontology and insider epistemology as the positions of this research. Section 5.2 then presents the qualitative data collection strategy of this research. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, time-line and time-use sheets and ecomap drawing. Sampling processes and ethical considerations are also addressed in this section. The section 5.3 explains the discursive narrative analysis method which is used to 'map' the interview discourses with a cartographic approach, and which also looks into the time-related and ecomap data. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary of the research methodology, presented in section 5.4.

5.1 Research Paradigm, ontology and epistemology

Child-centred research

Chapter 3 (see section 3.1) explored the idea that children have increasingly come to be seen in their own right in the past two decades, especially since the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989. Christensen (2008) discusses that the discourse around childhood in research was *on* children rather than *with* children until the Convention was adopted: children were perceived as objects rather than subjects. To recapitulate, childhood was seen as a natural stage in human development, rather than as an essential part of the social structure (Lange and Mierendorff, 2009). The shift in seeing children as subjects rather than objects is significant; however, Woodhead and Faulkner (2000) discuss that treating children as subjects does not yet fully involve them in the research process. To overcome this issue, children should be treated as participants, who have their own will and rights to know the purpose of the study, and can decide whether or not to take part in it. Following this, the present study considers that it is essential to see children as social actors in the research process.

In relation to the above paradigm shift, Coppock (2011) and Alanen (2005) assert that there is significant similarity between the study of childhood and that of feminism. Women's voices were hardly heard due to the nature of patriarchy in research processes. The feminist movement stressed women's invisibility in social processes, theories and research since around the 1960s. Applying this aspect to childhood research, there is a resemblance in trying to hear the voices of excluded people, such as women and children, rather than ignoring them in light of power relationships. Children's experiences had traditionally been studied through the eyes of adults until the paradigm shift occurred; for example, by looking at household status or asking parents how their children were performing.

Despite the similarity, there is a difference between feminist and childhood studies: the power relationship. It is inevitable that children have less power than adults overall, compared with adult women in relation to men. To overcome the power difference, Coppock (2011) attempted to involve children as part of the research process, rather than treating them as merely subjects of the research: children acted as researchers of other children. Coppock reflected from this experience that it is meaningful to seek to include children as part of the research process. However, adults eventually and ultimately did the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data rather than children. To this extent, the power difference between

children and adults persists, and it cannot be denied that children disappear in some parts of the research process. Contrarily, in terms of feminism research, women can take part in data analysis, which can be seen as maintaining a better power relationship than that of adults and children.

Hutchby and Moran-Ellis (1998) made an approach to this notion from the competence perspective. Unlike the feminists' argument about the gender gap, childhood study problematises the difference in levels of competence between children and adults. Childhood study thus recognises children as having their own rights, being competent and autonomous. However, an issue arises as to why it is necessary to develop specific childhood study and methods if attempting to look at children as being no different from adults. To overcome this dilemma, Alanen (2005) proposes a generational approach, which looks at children as socially constructed rather than naturally and biologically existing. This approach conceptualises childhood according to the particularities of location, time and social processes, rather than the physical difference that is prevalent between children and adults. For this reason, the relativity between different generations is valued and children can be treated as those who 'know' what it means to be children in the very same society that adults make sense of them differently (Mayall, 2000).

Ontology

In social research, it is essential to identify an ontological standpoint, which concerns what is out there to be known (Wallima, 2006). The present study takes the social constructionist ontological position, which considers that 'reality is constructed' by people's relationships with other physical objects around, and such reality can always change forms (Gergen, 1994, 1999; cited in, Sarantakos, 2005; Bryman, 2008). Constructionists argue that reality is not real out there, but is made into reality through people's experiences and how they are interpreted (Sarantakos, 2005). They also believe that people are involved in forming the world by constructing reality rather than solely receiving meaning. Within this constructionist approach, this thesis follows the strands of 'relational being' suggested by Kenneth Gergen (1999). Gergen developed the notion of 'relational being' based on three distinctive philosophies: Symbolic Interactionism, Cultural Psychology, and Phenomenology.

George Herbert Mead developed *Symbolic Interactionism* in *Mind, Self and Society* (1934), suggesting that the sense of self cannot exist without depending on social processes.

People develop to mentally symbolise things in each culture and society, and to play a role in symbolisation with others by understanding each other's discourses, gestures and derived meanings (Gergen, 1999). A person can make sense of who she is because others respond to her actions and decide what social role she has. Thus, a person cannot exist independently of others, and her mind depends on social interaction with other people. Though Symbolic Interactionism is praised for recognising the significance of social interaction, some criticisms persist. Symbolic Interactionism stresses that meaning is acquired solely from social processes, and does not consider that meaning can exist without other people. Furthermore, if people's social roles are already determined by social processes, it is difficult to pursue the functioning of their free will. In this case, Symbolic Interactionism erases the notion of one's autonomous being.

Cultural Psychology, which is developed based on Vigotsky's theory on individuals' relatedness, suggests that people's actions take place by reflecting their thoughts in relation to others (Gergen, 1999). A collective psychological thought allows a person to understand others and to have relationships with them, which are essential to knowing the appropriate feelings for various events. The way a person understands feelings is culturally specific and stems from interrelationships. This approach, again, is valuable as it demonstrates that learning takes place based on mutual relationships between people, but it has also attracted some criticism; for example, about the way people understand specific cultures before mutually transferring knowledge with others. In order for people to learn certain things through mutual relationships, basic knowledge is required for transmitting knowledge.

Phenomenology looks at people's cognitive and perceived experiences of events and can be more individualistic than other philosophical standpoints. Nevertheless, part of this philosophy considers that such experiences are intentional to external social patterns and structures (Gergen, 1999). The knowledge a person has is derived from experiences understood through the lens of social patterns. Yet again phenomenology attracts criticism because people do not know how they are transforming social experiences into knowledge and how it may affect the way they see the world.

Having considered all three philosophies, Gergen (1999) argues that there is a consistency among them that psychological feeling is derived from social processes, and that they conceptualise Constructionism from the relational perspective. Gergen discusses that conventional concepts of individualism or bounded being have a danger of capturing

selfishness, rather than seeking for collectiveness. If the entire population are to become selfish beings, achieving a harmonious society becomes a difficult task. Instead, Gergen puts relational process at the centre of discussion based on the concept of dialogue (Gergen, 1999, 2009). Gergen thus suggests that reality exists before people, but they make sense of it through the course of dialogical co-action:

All that we take to be real, true, valuable, or good finds its origin in coordinated action (Gergen, 2009, p.31).

Concepts, mental states and self-evaluation originate from the coordination of words (dialogue), which is acquired through relationships. One may evaluate her mental status, but if she is unaware of others' situations, it would be difficult to do so as there is no benchmark. It is not to say, however, that Gergen is suggesting the abolition of individualism. He proposes that by recognising that individuals are relationally intelligible, understandings of the human world may move forward beyond the individual account.

Though innovative, Gergen's (*ibid.*) theory of related being garnered some criticism. Churchill (2011) argues that Gergen's work is not ontological, but is a supplement to existing ontological thoughts, advancing them by looking at abstractionism with the different lens of relationalism. Additionally, Gergen's work is holistic and it is difficult to see which part of a relationship may affect a person's being. Gergen (2011) admits this difficulty in investigating a particular component of relationships, and agrees that there is a need to further consider whose perspective (either looking at an individual from her eyes or from the collective relationality) of relational being should be investigated. Sugarman and Martin (2011) also criticise Gergen for failing to see people's particular agency, which should be recognised with 'relational being'. A person's agency cannot be explained solely as an outcome of a social process. A relational social process requires an agent's ability to interpret it, otherwise it would be left without meaning. Gergen (2011), however, argues that his theorisation is not an attempt to omit the extent of individuality, but is an addition to it. People are not only individuals but also constituents of relationships, and thus there is a need to recognise this interconnectivity.

Epistemology

In terms of epistemology, there are several kinds of position taken in child-centred research. First is interpretivism; second is a 'new sociology of childhood'; and the third is 'insider epistemology', which is strongly rooted in feminist research.

Firstly, interpretivism considers that it is important to assess people's constructive image of reality reflectively, because experiences are interpreted differently by different individuals (Sarantakos, 2005). Such a notion is derived from the thoughts of Max Weber's *Verstehen* (understanding) in society and people's lives, which considers that people's interpretation of reality creates meaning in society (Bryman, 2008; Ritchie et al., 2014). By exploring people's understanding of their world, social science should be able to reach the explanation of cause and effect of social actions (Bryman, 2008). Thus, interpretivists often seek people's perceptions of, and how people make sense of, their world (Sarantakos, 2005). There are several approaches in interpretivism, such as 'symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, realism, hermeneutics, and naturalistic inquiry', of which the first two were explored in relation to Gergen's (1999) work in the above section. Among them, the present study follows a phenomenological approach in particular, which considers that people's social reality must be understood through their experiences (Gray, 2009). A phenomenological researcher would try to put herself in the place of a participant to explore the subject's experiences and seek new meaning. In this way, the present study would be inductive, and the development of theoretical framework in Chapter 4 may contradict this approach. However, it can also be considered that a theoretical framework can be a useful tool to support the exploration of participants' experiences.

Secondly, the 'new sociology of childhood' as an epistemology looks at children in their own right, and considers that they are 'knowers'. It also recognises that cultural, geographical and social contexts are important when considering the child's world, and tries to understand these differences with emic knowledge (Fattore, 2012). Hence, there is a need for researchers to consider where those children are situated, and see their experiences from their standpoint. As children are considered to be knowers, the meaning that participants present in the course of study should be co-constructed between participants and researchers, rather than objectively analysed by researchers.

Finally, 'insider epistemology' considers that the insider has better access to knowledge than outsiders of their experience, and has often been used by feminist researchers from an early stage (Tangen, 2008). With researchers' eyes open, but with the assumption that he or she does not know anything and that participants in the research know their world the best, the researcher should be able to gain data with the insider knowledge (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). In this epistemology, children can be treated as experts in their own lives (Dwyer and

Buckle, 2009; Langsted, 1994; cited in, Tangen, 2008).

Exploring these perspectives, the latter two also appear to be part of interpretivism, and combining them seems to be beneficial. Thus, this study employs interpretivism with a phenomenological approach, with a particular focus on insider epistemology in order to co-construct notions of well-being for Japanese children by recognising them as ‘knowers’.

5.2 Research Strategy

5.2-1 Qualitative method

The present study employs a qualitative methodology to explore children’s perspectives of well-being, as it allows the observation and interpretation of the real world to make sense of social phenomena (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). There are numerous proposed research methods to explore children’s experiences, particularly ethnography, observation and focus groups (James and Prout, 1997a; Green, 1990). As this study values the social construction of society embedded in children’s relational being (Gergen, 2009), the interest is in an interpretation of children’s social construction of their well-being, for which a qualitative method is considered an appropriate tool for investigation.

The rationale for employing a qualitative method here is that quantitative methods do not capture children’s experiences in-depth from their own perspectives. A few surveys of children have been conducted by several research organisations in Japan about Juku attendance and life satisfaction. The existing quantitative data (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-2) shows that an abundance of children attend Juku, and that they may spend large amounts of time there studying. The general public (adults) has been making the assumption that Juku is a burden for children, while at the same time valuing it for opening pathways to privileged schools. In this way, however, children’s voices about their Juku experience remain unrecognised. Quantitative data is pragmatic in comparing different datasets and it allows objective and general observations of social phenomena, but it may lack a detailed understanding of its underlying meaning (Sarantakos, 2005; Patton, 1990). Thus, as a part of processes to explore and assess children’s well-being, it is essential to qualitatively look into how children make sense of their well-being.

5.2-2 Data collection methods

There are broadly four fundamental ways to gather qualitative data: ‘(a) participating in research, (b) observing directly, (c) interviewing in depth, and (d) analysing documents and

material culture' (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p.97). Among these, in-depth interviewing is employed as a method to explore children's perceptions of well-being in relation to Juku attendance, by incorporating time-line and time-use sheets, as well as eco-mapping. The sections below explore these approaches.

In-depth Interview

Qualitative in-depth interview is a way of accessing a person's perceptions with the use of conversation (Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Patton, 1990). Though ethnography is stressed as an appropriate method by childhood scholars, it limits researchers to observing children's experiences, and thus there is a need to access them by other means (James and Prout, 1997a; Patton, 1990). Furthermore, this research initially intended to conduct an ethnographic study of Juku, but this would have violated ethical conduct, such as not being able to disclose the purpose of the research to participants, and for this reason this method had to be abandoned. Among the diverse kinds of interview approaches, such as structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Bryman, 2008), the latter two are of a qualitative nature. The unstructured interview is open-ended, and gives the interviewee flexibility in the direction the interview may take, and hence it is largely similar to a conversation (Burgess, 1984; cited in, Bryman, 2008). Semi-structured interview maintains a certain level of structure, yet still leaving leeway for participants to go as in-depth as they please (Burgess, 1984; Bryman, 2008; Braun and Clarke, 2013). To probe children's general life experiences, unstructured interviews would be useful as the interview is led by the participant. For this study, however, there are clear subjects: children's well-being and their Juku attendance. Thus, semi-structured interviews were employed to make sure that these topics were covered.

For the semi-structured interview, an interview guide was developed to assure that similar information was gathered based on the same questions across participants. Once the basic required information is gathered, the narrative can be elaborated: there is leeway for both the interviewer and the interviewee to be spontaneous and develop the storyline together (Patton, 1990). Patton suggests advantages in using an interview guide, such as allowing the interviewer to keep track of required subject topics and manage a limited amount of time with participants. It also allows the researcher to make the data collection systematic, rather than being left with an enormous amount of different sets of data. Following these, the interview guide is based on the operationalisation of suggested dimensions of well-being in

the theoretical framework (see Chapter 4 section 4.4-3).

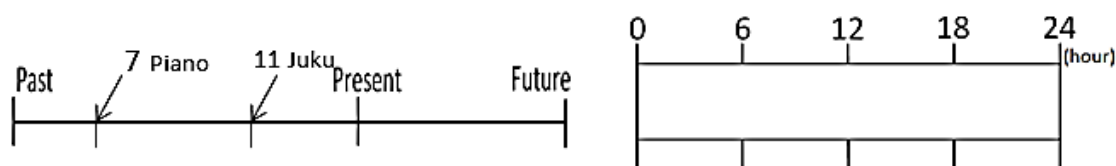
Structure of the interview: Operationalisation

The structure of interviews follows the dimensions suggested in the theoretical framework⁷: Competence, Agency, Security, Material, and Relationship and emotional being (Table 5-1). Additionally, as part of the interview, children were asked to write down their history of after-school activity⁸ attendance and time-use on a sheet of paper, such as Figure 5-1. These histories functioned as reflective tools. Children were presented with a sheet of paper (Figure 5-1), showing a time-line on the left and a time box on the right to show their time-use.

Table 5-1 Dimensions for interview questions

Dimensions/ Aspects	Content
Self-value	A person's sense of having an opportunity to function to his capacity, and of efficiency in interacting with the surrounding social environment.
Agency	Being in control of one's interests and derived behaviour, but with negotiation with adults.
Security	Important for children to be able to fully engage with their lives.
Materiality	Children's perception of their material well-being.
Relationship and emotional being	How children perceive of their relationships with other people.
Time	Children's perception of past, present and future. What role Juku has played or plays in their life.

Figure 5-1 Examples of timeline and time-use data



⁷ The detailed interview guide can be found in Appendix 1.

⁸ 'After-school activity' includes both Juku and out-of-school activity (OSA), where OSA represents non-academic activities such as piano and ballet lessons.

The time-related data was gathered because it can be useful to gain an insight into children's daily lives and it is easier for participants to write down their past experiences on paper rather than thinking back and sharing them solely with words. This kind of participatory method has been employed in several child-related studies (James, 2005; Crivello *et al.*, 2009; Tekola *et al.*, 2009). James (2005) discusses that time-lines show the personal events that are significant to participants. It can also highlight some events that are critical for the child but myself as an adult may not have imagined as important, and vice versa. Further, Tekola (2009) used two task-based methods such as drawing and diaries. Despite the benefit of task engagement, Tekola (*ibid.*) found that as children were so used to oral communication that they showed some level of difficulty in sharing their voices through those tasks. As a result, Tekola discussed that it could be problematic to only use task-oriented methods, and they should be supported by interview data. Thus, the time-lines in the present study are considered together with interview narratives.

For the time-line, children filled in what kind of out-of-school activities they have been doing, and how they felt and feel about these experiences. If desired, they could also state what they want to do in the future on the time-line. The 'Future' aspect is included following Uprichard (2008), Deleuze (1968), Lee (2001) and Prout's (2005) discussions on children's experiences of past, present and future at the same time. This is because children's present actions may be based on future aspirations. For the time box, participants were asked to fill in how they spend time on days when they have out-of-school activities and when they do not.

Eco-mapping (Space and relationship)

Eco-map is a term originated from 'ecology map' which seeks to probe people's interaction in their positioned environment (Kennedy, 2010). In the present study, the eco-map seeks to facilitate the children's thoughts about relationships with other people in their lived spaces such as home, school, after-school activities and community in this research. Ray and Street (2005, p.546) stress that it is useful to explore the strength of people's relationships with others (for example, families), showing three key forms of integration: relationships, social networks and support. Thus, this method is often employed in clinical family studies exploring the relationships and support networks between clinical workers, patients and surrounding people (Kennedy, 2010; Ray and Street, 2005; Rempel *et al.*, 2007). Social networks can be understood as people's interactions or communications in their daily

lives. Support, on the other hand, has deeper meaning than a mere social network, for integrating ‘positive or beneficial influences’ for a person (Ray and Street, 2005, p.546). In this procedure, participants can draw circles and connect them with lines; for example, lines with different thicknesses, dashes or waves can depict various kinds of relationships. According to Hartman (1995, p.117), eco-maps have a ‘visual impact’, and are able to present the facts, as well as perceptions of people’s relationships. Often, the person who is drawing the eco-map, or whose relationship is referred to, is positioned at the centre of the eco-map with a large circle, and other relational actors are drawn with other circles, connected with the central one (referred person) (Ray and Street, 2005). The underlined thought of this method is that people interact to support each other both materially and emotionally while at the same time negotiating among them (Ray and Street, 2005).

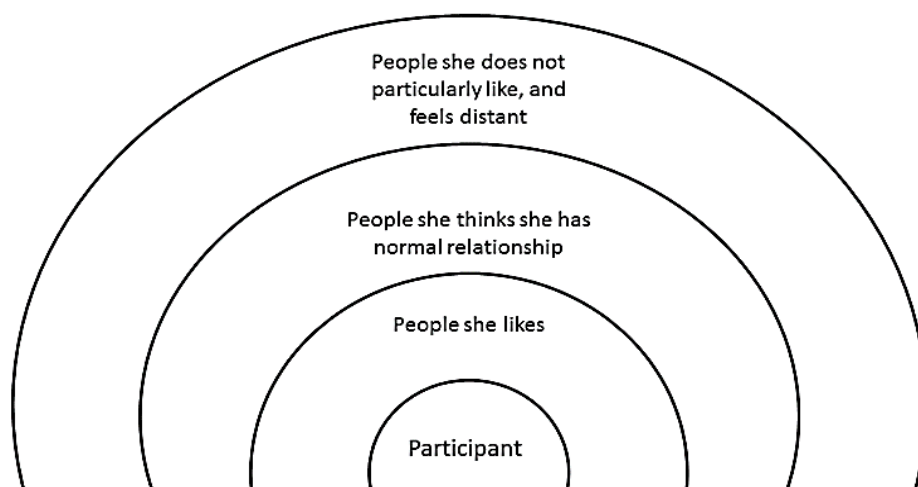
There are several advantages in employing eco-maps. For instance, research participants and researchers can work collaboratively in the process of drawing eco-maps. Collaboration allows eco-maps to be developed based on negotiations between the interviewer and interviewee, and allows the researcher (interviewer) to perceive the interviewee’s life as she sees it (Hartman, 1995; Ray and Street, 2005). This collaborative aspect of eco-map drawing can be considered especially beneficial when the participants in the research are children. As discussed in Chapter 3, there is an unavoidable issue of power relationships between child participants and adult researcher myself. Allowing children to take control over the research process may enhance their power in the research process and allow me to see their perspectives at a similar (if not the same) level as them. Eco-map drawing can also be a realisation of shadow networks, which the referred person (interviewee) may not realise exist (Rempel *et al.*, 2007). To this extent, eco-map development can be a useful tool for the participant to reflect on the environment in which she is situated and interacts. Another advantage of the eco-map is that it can enable the observation of relationships vis-à-vis space and time. People form various types and kinds of relationships according to various spatial settings, and they also change over time. If research were carried out in a longitudinal format, it is one of the benefits that the eco-map can offer the observation of change in people’s relational interactions (Rempel *et al.*, 2007; Ray and Street, 2005).

In this research, it was sought to make the eco-map drawing as fun an experience as possible for children to foster their engagement in conversation. Thus, it was used as a supportive research tool to help the children to talk about their relationships in lived spaces,

rather than for analysis. With the use of erasable coloured pens (Frixion pens) and a sheet of paper, it was hoped that children would gain something by completing an eco-map. The choice of the erasable pen is important here as children are able to make as many mistakes in drawing and writing as they want, and also correct them if they want to change it. The participants were asked if they wanted the copy of the completed eco-map, and if they did, it was photocopied and given to them. The aim of the research at the end is for them to feel that they had a fun and discovered themselves a little more through taking part in the research.

As drawing an eco-map is not a daily practice for children, pilot eco-map drawing was conducted with some children to see whether it is easy enough to take part. They commented that the original method of drawing an eco-map is a little confusing because they have to consider which person is related to whom and lay them out appropriately according to their thoughts. Subsequently, they suggested changing the format slightly, to represent the quality of relationships by the emotional distance of people around them. To follow their advice, four semi-circles were drawn on the paper with the smallest one representing the participant, the second showing people she feels close to, and the largest presenting the people she does not particularly feel close to. The idea is that as the circle gets larger, the more distant the person is from the participant (Figure 5-2). For clarification, children were asked to use a different choice of colours to represent each life space. As a result, there was a variety in eco-maps full of colours, and engagement in the process and the visualisation appeared to have helped children to explore their relationships a little more objectively than in their daily lives.

Figure 5-2 Ecomap



Although the eco-map drawing provided children a fun activity to enhance the engagement in the interview, there were some limitations in adopting this tool. First, there was an ambiguity in the definition of the quality of relationships. When explaining the task to the participants, I indicated that they could write down people they like, feel close to, dislike, or feel distant from. These like-dislike and close-distant dichotomies to evaluate relationships may imply different meanings. To make the task understandable for children with variation in instructions, these words were used; however, it in fact made it difficult to understand in the analytical process what children meant just by observing the eco-maps. Thus, it is preferable to clarify the definition of the quality of relationships for future use.

Challenges of conducting child-centred research in the Japanese context

Although a qualitative methodological framework with a child-centred approach is beneficial in conducting research with children, not least because it can generate a deeper understanding of children's lives, it also entails some challenges, particularly in the Japanese context. These challenges are two-fold: first, a strong power relationship exists between adults and children and second children's experiences of being constantly evaluated. The issue of power relationships is further aggravated by the fact that Japanese society is extremely hierarchical, and there are different ways of speaking depending on the seniority of a person spoken to. This custom essentially undermines the child-centred approach, as children may feel the need to consider what can be appropriate to share and in what way with an adult researcher. In fact, some children called me 'teacher' even though I stressed that I am not a teacher and I wanted to have an informal and friendly conversation with them.

The second challenge, children's experience of constant evaluation, is also linked to issues of social control, particularly in relation to the role of *Air* in the collective Japanese society. As section 3.2-2 explored, *Air* creates the pressure to gain consensus depending on the situation. This means that in the *Air*, a person may bend her thoughts when presenting them to others in order to make him or her desirable in the situation. Naturally, *Air* occurred between participants and myself, and it was often the case that participants would ask 'is this correct?', as though they are being tested. I tried to reassure them there was no right or wrong answers in what they shared during the research process. Nevertheless, it appeared extremely difficult for them to free themselves from the everyday cultural customs and demands. Thus, it appears that there is the need for careful consideration of what it means to conduct a child-centred research in cultural contexts such as Japan.

5.2-3 Ethical Consideration

Ethical issues in conducting research are the most crucial part in dealing with children. As much as children are recognised in their own right, legally they are under the protection of their parents and guardians. This thesis follows the ethical guidelines proposed by Barnado's (anon), the National Children's Bureau (Shaw *et al.*, 2011), and the British Sociological Association (British Sociological Association, 2002). Following these guidelines, the ethics approval form at the Department of Social and Policy Sciences in the University of Bath was submitted and approved. In the research process, I presented to participants (children), guardians (parents) and gatekeepers (Juku operators) the purpose of the research and explained how participants would be involved in the process.

All who are involved in the research were assured that their participation was fully voluntary and if they felt uncomfortable they could withdraw at any time. Children have minor status in the public sphere and thus consent for their participation must be collected from their parents (British Sociological Association, 2002). Shaw *et al.* (2011) from the National Children's Bureau suggest that obtainment of consent from children is not a one-off practice, but instead should be repeated over time to ensure that children consent to the various stages of the research process, such as before interviews and eco-map drawing, and after data collection.

This research involved participants' personal life experiences and there could have been a case where they felt uncomfortable talking about it. Participants were therefore informed that if they felt any unpleasantness in the process of the research, they should tell the researcher and the issue would be dealt with accordingly. Furthermore, as it deals with their personal lives, it is essential that their privacy is protected and they remain anonymous, with the use of pseudonyms and abstraction of identifiable information such as places.

As has been discussed throughout this chapter, power relationships are a significant issue when dealing with children in research. This can especially be the case in Japan, where society is highly hierarchical and for which three different levels of formality exist in the language. The hierarchy does not exist only in the language, but also in day-to-day behaviours. Japanese people are taught regularly to behave respectfully to senior people or those who have a higher rank than them; for example, junior high school students have a higher rank than primary school students. In such a context, it may be difficult for child participants to feel comfortable facing an adult researcher, but I committed to make sure that

the research environment was not intimidating and uncomfortable for them.

5.2-4 Sampling

The present study employs non-probability snowball sampling as a strategy to gather participants. At first, it was intended that criterion-based sampling be carried out; however, despite a large number of letters and advertisements sent to relevant institutions, including schools and Juku, there was so little response from them that it was required to shift to snowball sampling. There are some assumptions and reasons that may account for the difficulty in attaining samples. For instance, ordinary schools may not favour their students attending Juku because it may cause them to be fatigued during the daytime. Another assumption can be made that as a Juku is a private business they did not want to endanger their profits. A clear reasoning is difficult to make as most institutions that were approached did not respond to the letters, but it seems me not being a member of their institutional *Seken* made the participant recruitment difficult.

As participant recruitment through institutions did not succeed, I then shifted to snowball sampling via gatekeepers, such as English and piano teachers from my own past and mothers whom I became acquainted over the years. These gatekeepers spread the word about this research, and in this way some children showed an interest in participating in the research. Once children had participated in the research, they were asked if they could identify another person who could take part in the study. Furthermore, as my time for fieldwork in Japan was limited, not as many participants as initially expected were recruited. Thus, I conducted fieldwork for a second time on the next visit to Japan at a later date. In the second round, I approached a much smaller Juku, and they were willing to act as a gatekeeper. In total, across both the first and second fieldwork periods thirty girls with experience of Juku attendance, graded between fifth grade in primary school (P5) and the senior year (H3) in school, participated in this research. The sections below explain some details of the sample specificities.

Age, school grade and gender

The initial intention for the samples was to focus on two grades (fifth grade of primary schools and the second grade of junior high schools) attending Juku in Japan, because they are most likely to take entrance examinations or to be preparing for the next level of schooling. In other words, the purposes of attending Juku may differ at the various stages of childhood, and it would be beneficial to talk to children in different stages. McNamee and

Seymour (2012) suggest that there is an issue in the tendency to focus on a particular age group as they cannot be representative of the whole child population, but for this study focusing on this age range is essential because of the prevalence of Juku attendance in the latter part of childhood. Nevertheless, despite the objective of focusing on two grades, the school grade range was expanded to cover years between the fifth grade of primary school (P5) and the senior year of high school (H3) due to the difficulties in gaining access to children. Further, it became evident that the sample were going to be girls, which could be a result of snowball sampling that originated from girls. It could also be that being a woman myself made it easier for girls to come forward to participate in the research in comparison to boys.

Geographical locations

The girls who participated in the research were, except for one from Tokyo, mainly from Kanagawa, which is one of the prefectures in the urban region: Kanto metropolitan area. As Chapter 2 (section 2.3-2) saw, Juku attendance tends to be more extensive in urban areas than the rural ones (Yotsuya Otsuka, 2008). Kanagawa and Tokyo were chosen as focal areas, because even within the metropolitan area, they stood out in terms of the proportion of children attending Juku (Table 5-2). Kanagawa was a regional area of focus because I was most familiar with Kanagawa, and it was expected that this familiarity would help in understanding children's lives. It could be the case that the characteristics of participants are skewed to particular area, and do not represent the sample, but it was hoped that it would be a good starting point.

Table 5-2 Proportion of public junior high school students attending Juku in metropolitan area in Japan

Prefectures	Number of schools participated in academic survey	Proportion of children attending Juku
Across Japan	20,177	60.3%
Kanagawa	858	72.4%
Tokyo	1,301	67.7%
Saitama	820	67.1%
Chiba	820	65.8%
Gunma	326	58.9%
Ibaraki	534	57.6%
Tochigi	382	57.4%

Source: <http://www.nier.go.jp/14chousakekkahoukoku/factsheet/prefecture/> (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, 2014)

Juku Sample

At first, a number of Juku in Kanagawa were approached in order to observe the Juku environment and let children get to know me before I recruited them for an interview. The sampling was conducted in this way because it was expected to make the interview process easier for the children by acquainting them with me first, rather than talking to me for the first time in interview. The choice of Juku for this research was middle-sized and regional comprehensive Juku. Comprehensive Juku are, as explained in Chapter 2, those which supplement education but at the same time aim for successful entrance examination results. The reason for not choosing admission Juku was that it may have created a sampling bias. Admission Juku are indeed a large part of Juku education, but focusing on students in such Juku would limit the sample to those who have made a big decision to take entrance examinations, especially in the case of primary school students. While high school entrance examinations are compulsory for progression, they are not in junior high school. Admission Juku also require financial resources as well as a high level of motivation because they are well known for their competitiveness. Comprehensive Juku, in contrast, incorporate both supplementary and examination studies. To this point, it appeared more probable that it would be a part of children's lives as an ordinary activity, rather than as something exceptional, such as preparing for an entrance examination.

In the course of the fieldwork, only one institution, Juku X, replied to the request to participate in the research. Extending rapidly within Kanagawa, around 20,000 students attend Juku X. After a few email exchanges, they asked me to come and explain the research. Overall, I went to have discussions with them twice. After the first meeting, Juku X decided to participate in the research, and I was called again to discuss my involvement in their environment. The plan was for me to work as a member of staff, and for children to get used to myself in the meanwhile. This means that I would have entered in their *Seken*. I would have sent the informed consent to children and their parents, explaining who I was and the purpose of the research. This process was important for conducting a child-centred research. However, this agreement entailed a lot of rules that would have violated the research ethics. First of all, this Juku's imposed rule would not allow me to inform participants about the research. This Juku sought to establish equality between teachers. Children were encouraged to see teachers as having equal academic abilities, and not to prioritize teachers from prestigious universities over those from less prestigious ones. To ensure this, teachers and staff were not allowed to disclose their academic histories with students. This approach is

valuable for children and Juku themselves so that there would be no prejudice among them. However, for the purposes of this social research, this rule would have violated the ethical considerations of the research about informing participants of the details of the research, including information about the institution that I belonged to (in this case, the University of Bath) (Shaw *et al.*, 2011).

The second possible ethical violation was that protection of participants and their information could not be guaranteed (British Sociological Association, 2002). Juku is a private business, and it has revenue to protect, as well as children's safety. As an institution, to accept me in, they wanted access to the information gathered in the research process. Even if methods to protect individuals' privacy were used, such as the use of pseudonyms, certain people, such as the Juku teachers, would be able to identify the children. If the information was given to the Juku, it would have meant breaking the promise of the children's anonymity, and it may have worsened the Juku environment for them. Juku X was hoping to make use of the information collected to improve their Juku. Also, to make sure that this research would not publicise the wrong information about them. Again, this would have violated the ethical considerations of the research. All things seemed well, and the negotiation and arrangement went almost to the point where I could start observing the participants. However, the nature of Juku being an educational business led to the above three ethical violations, and I had to terminate the cooperation with Juku X. For this reason, I made a new approach to recruit participants through schools and gatekeepers, such as Juku teachers (but not institutions) and mothers, by sending them information about the research.

As my time in Japan was limited, an insufficient number of interviews with participants were collected. Thus, in January 2014, a second round of interviews was conducted with two small-scale Juku acting as gatekeepers to recruit participants. The demography of participants is as listed below (Table 5-3). There were children from primary to high school levels, from public and private schools, and who go to both class and one-to-one Jukus.

Table 5-3 Profile of research participants

	Name (pseudonym)	Age/School grade	School type	Juku type
1	Carrie	10/5	Public	Group (small number)
2	Charice	17/ 11	Private	Group (small number)
3	Countrymaam	17/11	Private	One-to-one
4	Dee	16/10	Public	One-to-one
5	Futaba	10/5	Private	One-to-one
6	Hanako	16/10	Public	Unknown
7	Haruka	15/10	Private	Group (small number)
8	Keiko	17/11	Private	Group (small number)
9	Kilua	12/6	Public	Group (small number)
10	Lico	13/8	Private	One-to-one, but in group One-to-one
11	Mao	17/11	Private	Group (small number)
12	Mari	16/10	Public	One-to-one
13	Mayuko	16/11	Private	Group
14	Mayu	12/7	Private	Group
15	Midori	11/5	Public	Group
16	Miho	17/12	Public	One-to-one but in group
17	Minnie	17/10	Private	One-to-one
18	Misa	16/10	Private	Group (small number)
19	Miyu	12/7	Private	One-to-one
20	Nana	14/9	Public	Group
21	Neko	18/12	Public	Group (small number)
22	Pianist	11/6	Public	One-to-one
23	Ran	10/5	Public	Group
24	Rin	13/7	Private	Group (small number)
25	Risako	18/12	Public	One-to-one
26	Satoko	14/8	Private	One-to-one
27	Shin	15/10	Public	One-to-one but in group
28	Yui (A)	13/8	Public	Group
29	Yukari	13/7	Public	Group (small number)
30	Yuki	15/10	Public	One-to-one but in group

5.2-5 Data collection and management***Language***

One of the major problems in this research is the use of language. Contextualisation, conceptualisation and theorisation are carried out in English, but the fieldwork took place in

Japanese. In Japanese, there is an inescapable issue of honorific language (*Keigo*). There are three different levels to honour people: 1) *Sonkei-go*, 2) *Kenjō-go*, and 3) *Teinei-go*. It is in fact the respectful aspect of the culture in the Japanese language that the Cultural Council in the MEXT published the *Keigo* Guideline in order to assure the proper use of the *Keigo* in today's society (Cultural Council, 2007). The different levels of *Keigo* can be assigned depending on both the personal relationship and the contextual situation. *Sonkei-go* is used when a person is paying 'upward' respect to another; for example, from a younger person to an older one, or from a student to a teacher. The second form, *Kenjō-go* is used when a person humbles himself to another to show respect. The final one, *Teinei-go* is used as a polite form to show some respect to another person. Hence, especially when hierarchical power is considered, (in terms of this thesis, child and adult), *Sonkei-go* can be used. To this extent, it can be difficult for children to feel the same level of power as myself. One way that power differences can be minimised is for me to use friendly, day-to-day wording in the process of the research. Perception of societal position is important in Japan, and thus a solution must be considered in order for children to feel comfortable.

Secondly, the notion of well-being is not directly translatable from English to Japanese. When translated, even government documents refer to it as 'happiness'. As explored in Chapter 4, happiness is only a part of well-being. Thus, there is an issue of how the notion of 'well-being' is to be explored. Aside from 'happiness' as a translated word, 'quality of life' is commonly used, but usually in a medical sphere. When 'quality of life' is considered, however, 'happiness' is included within it. To this extent, then, the present study employs 'happiness' and 'quality of life' as synonymous to 'well-being'.

Place, Recording and Transcription

To keep the child participants as comfortable as possible, the interviews took place in locations suggested by them. The interviews were recorded on an iPod, with the use of an attachable microphone, because it has a function of recording sound as far as the file storage allows, and once recorded it can be transferred to a computer file. In order to meet the ethical requirements, though, once the data was interpreted it was deleted from the iPod and kept safe. After the interview took place, all the recordings were transcribed. They were transcribed in Japanese, in order to keep the sense and meaning of what was said in the interview.

5.3 Data Analysis: Discursive narrative analysis Analytical method

This thesis employs discursive narrative analysis, which is developed by combining narrative and discourse analyses, to explore the data, inspired by Sutherland et al. (2013). They suggest that by integrating the two forms of analysis, researchers can look into narratives from an interactional perspective, because both narrative and discourse analysis methodologies have shortcomings but they can supplement each other. Narratives are defined as ‘an account of events or more than one event, characterised by having some sort of structure, often temporal in western cultures, and other story-elements’ (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.333). Bruner (1991) further suggests that people’s experiences are organised in narratives ruled by cultural traditions, and show the occurrence of events over ‘human’ time. The concept of ‘human’ time is time highlighted by significant events with specific meaning assigned by a person (Ricoeur, 1983; in, Bruner, 1991). Thus, narratives are not exactly the same as stories, and researchers can consider the underlying assumptions based on a cultural context (Bell, 2002; in, Sutherland *et al.*, 2013).

Sutherland et al. (2013) make distinctions between narrative and discourse analysis, where the former is concerned with story as a whole for analysis and the latter divides the story into categories according to its discursive practices. For these characteristics, discourse analysis tends to look into details at the micro-level, while narrative analysis tries to capture the socio-cultural context in which the language and story are performed. Incorporating the two hence allows researchers to analyse the narratives that are specific to a certain setting. As this study collects data not only via interviews that provide detailed accounts of participants’ experiences, but also with time-line and time-use information and eco-maps, which enable the depiction of the social context in which they are situated, discursive narrative analysis appears to be an appropriate method for data analysis. The following sections illustrate the analytical method first, using narrative analysis for time data and eco-maps, and secondly discourse analysis, which explore interviews with a cartographic approach.

5.3-1 Narrative analysis: time and ecomap

Timeline

This research is methodologically unique for incorporating time-line, time-use and eco-maps in qualitative analysis. As for the time-line, a first attempt was made to analyse the data using NVivo, qualitative data analysis computer software. It was chosen because the time-lines that participants drew were imported as pictures, and it allowed me to locate the

associated transcribed interview data and annotate them. However, despite the benefit of mapping the narratives onto the pictures, it left the dataset disorganised due to the variation in participants' drawings and it was impossible to identify and summarise the key ideas. Hence, it was necessary to change the format of the organisation of the data, and Microsoft Excel was chosen as appropriate software. I input the time-lines based on the participants' drawings, and summarised them in one spreadsheet (see Appendix 4). This also allowed for colour-coding, which visually shows the variation in the dataset. The individual time-lines were also kept as separate spreadsheets, which allowed me to analyse each in the same format.

Before looking into the details of each participant's time-line, all participants' time-lines had to be considered together to see the overview of their experiences across childhood. To do so, three summary time-lines were collated, in relation to overall after-school activities, OSA and Juku attendances. These collated time-lines show the proportional significance of children's feelings about these activities, such as like, feeling neutral and dislike. The data was explored in proportion, as the number of participants for each age group varied, and it caused difficulty in looking at the data comprehensively (for detailed timeline, see Appendix 3). To have a better understanding of the nature of changes and variation in children's after-school activities, school-levels are also considered. School and after-school activities are inseparable, because children's lives are deeply embedded in the school context, and because each school level involves certain rites of passage, such as entrance examinations.

After exploring children's general experiences of overall after-school activities, Juku and OSA, each participant's time-line was considered in detail with relevant narratives from the interviews. The transcribed data was kept in Japanese, which was the language used in interviews, in order to maintain the sense of children's feelings about certain events. Only when they are presented in the empirical chapters are the chosen quotes translated into English with a great caution so as not to skew children's voices. These voices were analysed using a thematic approach, which looks at "what" is said more than "how" it is said' (Riessman, 2005, p.2). By gathering individual narratives into certain categories, conceptual themes are created, and in this study the time-line is used to support those themes.

Exploring time-line-related data, there is one fundamental issue that needs to be considered: memory bias. A number of psychological studies in the past show that positive memories tend to prevail over negative ones (Wilson *et al.*, 2003; Walker *et al.*, 2003).

Walker et al. compared different types of claims, such as those who stress that negative experiences remain more vivid in the memory than positive ones and vice versa. Waldfogel (1948), for instance, conducted research with participants who recalled and listed their memories of the first eight years of their lives on a sheet of paper. After this task was finished, they were asked to add details of the events that they recalled, and emotions that are relevant to them. This research revealed that people tend to have more pleasant memories, in comparison to unpleasant or neutral emotions. Though there are several studies suggesting that negative events have a more significant impact than positive ones on a person's memories, Walker et al. (2003) assert that positive experiences are prevalent. Considering this tendency that positive events tend to be highlighted in people's memories, caution must be taken as children may not refer to negative experiences in their time-lines. Thus, attempts were made not to draw conclusions about children's experiences from only positive experiences.

Time use

In a same manner as the time-line data, time-use data was organised into a spreadsheet on Microsoft Excel, which can be found in Appendix 3. The collected data is rich and has a lot of possibilities in understanding children's daily lives; however, it was also unmanageable. Thus, case studies were conducted (see Chapter 6) in order to highlight some aspects emerging from the time-use data by focusing on specific participants as representatives of the demographic groups.

Eco-map

Before conducting the fieldwork, it was expected that eco-mapping would enable participants to engage in the research practice through activities rather than solely talking about their lives, and that it would provide rich data in how they perceive their social relationships. Furthermore, for exercising child-centred research, eco-mapping appeared effective to achieve a friendly atmosphere so that I would not intimidate the children. It did indeed seem to have made the interaction with me a fun experience, using coloured pens and sharing their thoughts about the people around them. Despite its benefit, analysing this data was again difficult because of the freedom in working on an eco-map. As it was an attempt to value children's opinions, they were given only minimum rules to work on eco-map, such as showing the closeness of people in order and changing the colour of the pen according to the space where the relationship takes place. Children appreciated this freedom but it resulted

in a variation of styles with which they worked on it. Some put friends and family individually, while some others put large circles stating that it represents all her classmates. The final result of the eco-map data can be found in Appendix 4. Thus, the eco-maps are not used significantly as data in the analytical process, but as supporting material to understand interview narratives.

5.3-2 Discourse analysis: interview data

In order to explore children and young people's perceptions of well-being in-depth, discourse analysis with a dialogical approach was chosen as the analytical method for the interview data. This thesis follows, in particular, instructions by Paul Sullivan (2012), who summarised the approach based on Bakhtin's work. Bakhtin (1993) developed the notion of dialogue in analysing Dostoyevsky's writing, considering truth as not abstract but a lived experience. Sullivan (2012) argues that the interesting point about his work is that a person's 'self' and the 'others' are signified by their relationship: a self (author) poses a value on the other (hero). What Sullivan and, originally Bakhtin, mean by this is that the author (a participant) draws her identity in the light of how she may look at herself through another's eyes.

According to Sullivan (2012), participants are often seen as subjects to be studied in qualitative methods, but in the dialogical view they also study themselves. The analytical process in the dialogical approach also does not only try to produce one particular meaning from the data, but to understand how such a meaning may be experienced in different ways. What is particularly striking in this approach is that it considers the notions of time and space. Ricoeur (1973), a French philosopher argued that 'genre' organizes discourses. Similarly, Bakhtin (1984 [1929]; cited in, Sullivan, 2012, p.46) argued that 'chronotope', which is 'the mix of time, space and value' shapes genres, and allows them to be identified. Depending on the time and space wherein the participant experienced an event may affect the whole meaning she attaches to a word. Thus, time and space, or in other words 'genre', are tools to identify people's perceptions (Morson and Emerson, 1990). This approach also attempts to put a spotlight on participants' subjectivity vis-à-vis chronotope. The main point that Sullivan (Morson and Emerson, 1990, p.43) stresses is that 'subjectivity [...] is social, relating to self as well as others': a person's subjectivity based on the lived experience does not exist independently of others, but in relation to them.

There are three types of subjectivity to be considered in the dialogical approach: blank,

complex and uncomplicated subjectivities. Blank subjectivity tends to focus on momental exchanges in conversation, and analysis may require a lot of detail in transcriptions, such as punctuation and intonation. Uncomplicated subjectivity, on the other hand, sees that a self (individual) places her own meaning in the conversation, and the analyst's role is to recover it. Finally, in complex subjectivity, selves (individuals) are seen to have own thoughts and meaning, but within a particular social structure and context (Parker, 1997). This complex subjectivity appears to be the most relevant to the dialogical approach. Sullivan (2012, p.41) summarizes that a conscious individual is the focus of the dialogical approach, where the consciousness is responsive to the accounts of others. From this point, it is clear that a dialogical approach puts significance in chronotope (time and space) and a person's subjectivity in relation to other people and the socio-cultural context.

Sullivan (2012) suggests that discourse analysis is a suitable tool for a dialogical approach. However, in contrast to the generic understanding of discourse, he focuses on its capability to 'shape selves', and how such selves in return 'respond to this shaping' (Sullivan, 2012, p.43). Thus, in this study, discourse analysis tries to make connections between research and the real world, while at the same time attempting to identify the production of subjectivity. Further, Bakhtin (1981) stresses the importance of 'genre' in looking at the data. In the dialogical approach, analysis of genre and discourse, which constitute one's intonation, is essential, and helps the analyst to narrow down the important areas in the data. The next section looks into the cartographic approach, which facilitates grouping the genres.

Mapping the story

In order to be familiarised with the story of each participant's life, spider diagrams were drawn. For each participant, one spider diagram was produced, with each branch related to a discourse. As a result, thirty spider diagrams were produced, showing the aspects that are significant in the participants' lives with larger spaces on the paper. For example, the spider diagram below shows the interview data with Nana. As can be seen, the area taken up on the paper is large when she talked about a certain topic in abundance. This resembles a method of cartography suggested by Lenz Taguchi and Palmer (2014). Lenz Taguchi and Palmer follow the *rhizome* theory, which incorporates an element of cartography, to explore Swedish schoolgirls' well/ill-being at school.

Rhizome was discussed by the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychologist Felix Guattari (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-4). A *rhizome* depicts the world as a tuber-like system

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.5), which is made of multiplicities and defined by an abstract line. From this root, there are multiple offshoots spreading while making $n-1$ dimensions. What they mean by $n-1$ is that new dimensions are always created by subtracting already existing dimensions and adding new ones to maintain multiplicity (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.6). Furthermore, the *rhizome* does not have beginning or end points that are typically seen in structures, but rather it has lines tangled together (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.21). For this reason, it is also seen as ‘a tangle of spaghetti’ metaphorically (Dahlberg and Moss, 2005), p.116}(Olsson, 2009, p.xx). Deleuze and Guattari argue that the way of seeing the world until now, especially in Western ideology, was tree-formed, which puts priority in hierarchy, linearity and dichotomy (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Dahlberg and Moss, 2005). Instead, the *rhizomatic* world spreads in flat directions (*planes of consistency*) without hierarchies (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.4). Deleuze and Guattari illustrate this process in *cartography*, as the map (not tracing) freely constructs new connections and dimensions (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.21; Lenz Taguchi and Palmer, 2014). For the nature of the concept, their philosophy is called ‘geo-philosophy’, which maps complexly interlinking social changes (Ringrose, 2011). To this extent, it can be considered that the method of cartography is appropriate to explore children’s experiences and their well-being. In a cartographic drawing, a participant’s profile is put at the centre and her narratives are placed with lines (lines of flight) to form genres. Once the genres are identified with each of the *rhizomes*, each genre is explored in-depth with a thematic approach to generate conceptual understanding of the participant’s life.

5.4 Chapter Summary: Reflection on the method

Though the methodology is carefully thought-through, there are limitations that may affect the quality of the research. As many qualitative methods involve interaction with people, interviewees may feel uncomfortable in certain settings. Particularly because this research involves children in Japan, there is an undeniable power difference between interviewer and participant children (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Additionally, interviews require the interviewer to be skilled in listening and elaborating the narrative, which may lead to low quality data. Last but not least, the children who participated in this research were all incredibly busy with schooling and Juku attendance. Thus, for most of the participants there was a strict limit in the time allowed to interview the children and this caused difficulties in deepening the conversation with them.

Chapter 6 Observing Child Life after-school Experience across time

6.0 Introduction

This chapter probes children's diverse experiences that emerged from the analysis of time-related data and the related discourse in the interviews. As indicated in Chapter 3 section 3.2-1, it is important to recognise the variability in children's experiences both in overall life and after-school activities within childhood. Adam (2006) argued that the relationship people have to time is the essential element of one's being, for although time flows with the clock, there is variation in how it is lived. Industrial society has increasingly come to consider time as a resource (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1). Thus, not only money but also time is considered as an indicator of a family's investment in children, and children are increasingly required to schedule their play time as a consequence of there being more opportunities for what may be considered more worthwhile ways to spend this time. For example, Haruka (aged 16) stated "I didn't like that even if my friends invited me to play together, I had to turn them down because of Juku". As such, Juku is an educational investment for the future (see Chapter 2 section 2.4 and Chapter 3 section 3.1-1), and children have to dedicate a certain amount of time out of their daily lives to undertake this activity. To this extent, time is a useful dimension to look at when considering the construction of children's lives and experiences. Following this, the exploration of time data relates to research questions 2, 3 and 4, (see Chapter 1 section 1.2) which consider the significance of their Juku attendance with regards to their present and future being, whether there are age specific differences and the nature of their autonomy (agency).

The focus in this chapter is Juku and out-of-school activities. This serves as a foundation for the next chapter 7, in which there is an exploration of how Juku is positioned in children's lives and child well-being in the context of Japan. Section 6.1 uses timelines and related interview discourses to look at children's after-school activity experiences overall, as well as Juku and out-of-school activities (OSA) as separate matters of interest. Section 6.2 then focuses on four children who have been chosen as cases that demonstrate examples of age and type of education, that is, they are children from across the age spectrum and attend public and private schools. The purpose is to elicit a comparison of their experiences and perceptions. Given the school system, pupils from different types of school are expected to follow different lifestyles and schooling trajectories in terms of the annual calendar for

taking entrance examinations. In section 6.3 children's future perspectives are addressed with the interest being in analysing the data to see whether, and if so, to what extent, children share the perception of Juku being an investment for the future. As Chapter 2 section 2.5 explored briefly, gendered constraints with regard to balancing work and family lives may await them in the future. For this reason, the section briefly looks at the gender aspect of Juku attendance. In relation to children's perspectives of the future, the Japanese notion of *Gambaru* emerged in children's discourses and this is explored in section 6.4. Section 6.5 reviews the preceding sections and identifies the emerging themes: constraint, agency, a sense of duty, social relationship and future. Finally, section 6.6 concludes with a chapter summary.

In order to maintain ethical conduct and protect participants' privacy, pseudonyms are used. Through the interviews, it was felt unsuitable to refer participants as 'children' solely, and they were called 'children and young people' instead. Although the latter seems more appropriate, they will be referred to as 'children' in the following chapters to maintain the inclusiveness of the notion of childhood. Additionally, in order to differentiate non-Juku activities and time spent attending Juku clearly, the former will be referred to as out-of-school activities (OSA). When these two forms of activity are combined, they are referred to as after-school activities.

6.1 Timeline analysis

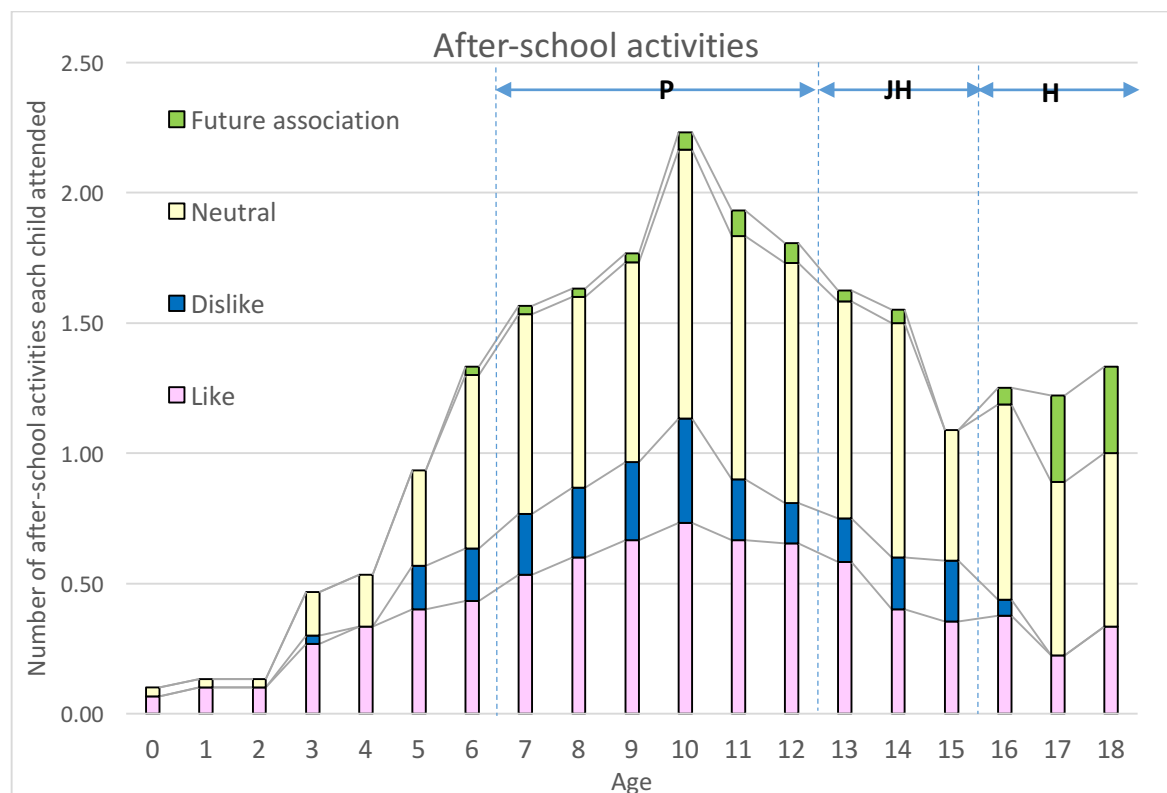
During the interviews, children were asked to write their experiences on a timeline of Juku and OSA in the past and present; for example, whether they liked them or not and what they enjoyed, and they talked through the information as they wrote it down. It is important to look at the timeline while reflecting on what children said, in order to understand the meanings that cannot be gathered from within the timelines. In total, the experiences of thirty girls were gathered in the form of timeline data. To visually depict children's experiences in after-school activities, three figures that proportionally show how many activities children were involved in the past and at the time of the interview, and how they perceived those experiences, are collated as explained in Chapter 5 (see section 5.3-1) based on the detailed timelines for each participant, which can be seen in Appendix 2. To recap, it shows the proportional participation rate of the after-school activities for each age.

Figure 6-1 shows children's experiences regarding all after-school activities in terms of whether they liked, disliked or felt neutral about their activity, as well as its functionality,

that is, its relation to their future lives. Figure 6-2 presents data regarding children's experience of the Juku, and finally, Figure 6-3 focuses on that of OSA. The following sections explore these figures along with pertinent interview discourses.

6.1-1 After-school activities

Figure 6-1 Children's experiences in after-school activities overall



*P: Primary school JH: Junior high school H: High school

* “Future association” is activities participants associate with their future. E.g. Learning to play the piano to be a pianist in the future.

Figure 6-1 shows children's experience regarding after-school activities overall, and sets the context for further discussion of Juku and OSA in the following sub-sections. To start with looking at the overall experiences of after-school activities can be useful to gain a preliminary idea of how children spent their hours after school. At the first glance, the pattern shows a bell shaped curve, indicating a steady increase in the number of after-school-activities in which they participated until the age of ten, where it appears many were engaged in just over two activities per week and a subsequent decrease to just over one per week across the year. This suggests that the age of ten is the busiest in childhood in terms of activity attendance.

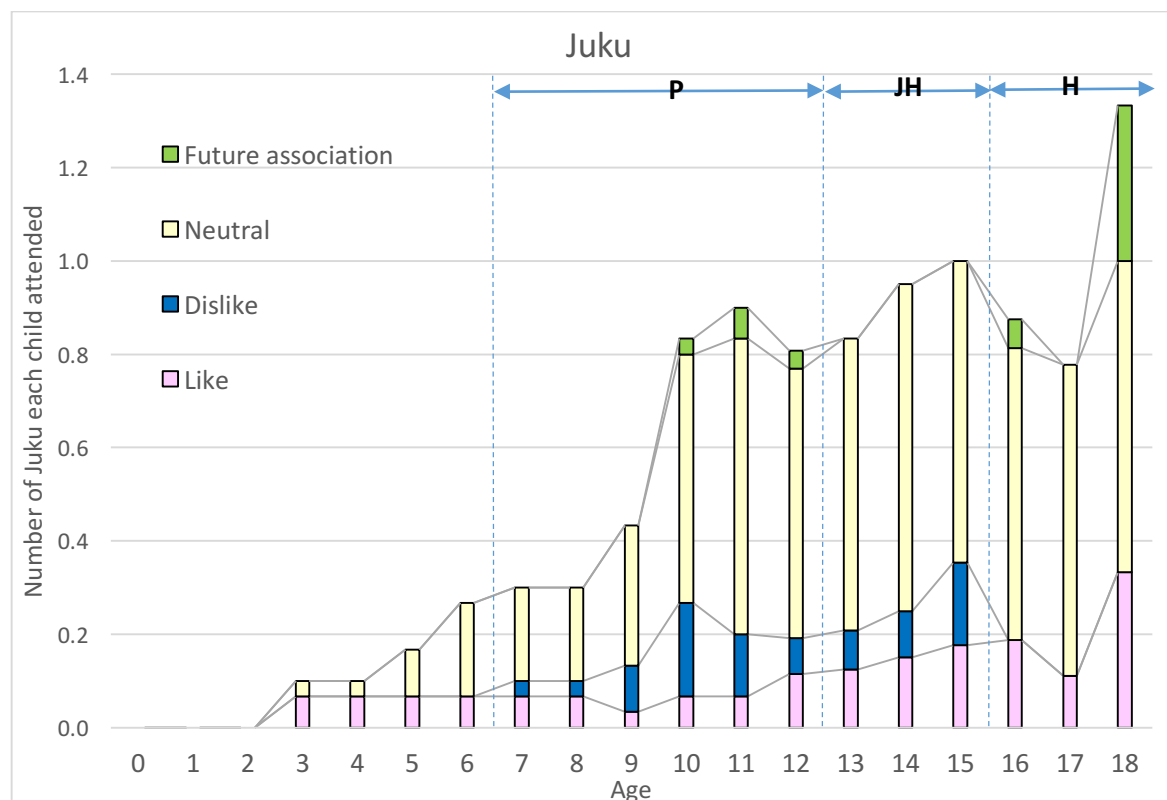
The primary characteristic regarding children's orientations that can be identified is that no respondent reported disliking any activities up to the age of three and, similarly, towards the end of childhood, from 15 years old onward (in high school years). To account for the pattern that can be observed amongst the younger children, one possible reason may be that, needless to say, few were involved in any activity during their infancy. Further, they may not have recognised how they were spending time as involvement in specific activities in the earliest stage of their childhood, but rather as a part of their everyday lives. This aspect of not remembering the details surrounding their attendance may be a consequence of children talking about their memories, which was addressed in the methodology, in Chapter 5 section 5.3-1. However, as they may have gained an awareness of there being distinct activities, possibly from three years of age and upwards, such as attending kindergarten and going to after-school lessons. Also developing an awareness of liking some activities and disliking others may account for why the proportion of disliked activities increases from five years old.

The proportion of disliked activities reported in the data steadily rises for those aged between five and ten years, but at the same time, the number of after-school activities that children attend decreases in the period between the ages of 11 and 18 years. The increase in the proportion of disliked activities from five years old could be due to the children's participation in unfavourable activities despite their opinion and/or the increased intensity in their schedule brought about by increasing the numbers of activity they take part in. By contrast, two reasons can be considered for the decrease in after-school activity attendance after the age of ten. One is that children grow to like or feel neutral about after-school activities. The other is the decrease in the proportion of children who were involved in OSA overall. Recalling the data taken from the MEXT on the rate of participation in after-school activities (MEXT, 2008c) discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3-2), it was evident that the attendance rate of OSA decreased and that of Juku increased for children during junior high school years. Regarding this, it may be that children do not come to tolerate or no longer dislike after-school activities, but simply that such activities, particularly OSAs, are no longer burdens, as they ceased attending them. When they enter senior high school, there is a decrease in the proportion reporting that they dislike activities and, at the same time, the association of activities with the future appears. This may be, following the above, due to an increase in Juku attendance, and children associating this particular activity with their future objectives. From the data in Figure 6-1, it may be concluded that there are changes in

children's perceptions and experiences regarding after-school activities with respect to OSA and Juku attendances. In order to look at each activity more in detail, the following subsections focus on Juku and OSA in turn.

6.1-2 Experience of Juku

Figure 6-2 Variation in childhood experiences regarding Juku



*P: Primary school JH: Junior high school H: High school

Starting Juku

Figure 6-2 shows considerable variation in children's experiences pertaining to attending Juku, and most children appear to remain neutral about Juku attendance until the age of six. The proportion of dislikes regarding this peaks for ten and fifteen year-olds. For most participants who began attending Juku before the age of nine years, it could be assumed that they were attending supplementary Juku where the study would not be intense, and they may not have felt it to be a burden. For instance, Midori stated that she started attending Juku classes for mathematics, because she had a bad school record.

For Juku, for the fact that I couldn't do well in mathematics my father said 'shouldn't you attend [Juku]?' So that's why [I started attending Juku].
(Midori)

In this case, she did not start attending Juku under her own will, but did not consider it a burden because she felt she had to supplement her mathematics. Further, these children may see Juku as an extended version of schooling as they are studying similar things there, as stated by Carrie.

I think it's ordinary [to attend Juku]. (Carrie)

In fact, *Kumon* was, by and large, the common type of Juku the participants were attending before ten years old. The *Kumon Corporation* is a franchise offering supplementary tuition, where the students are given drill materials suitable for their educational level. The next three sections in turn explore children's experiences of Juku in relation to entrance examinations in primary, junior high and high school years.

Pressures from junior high school entrance examination preparation: experience in primary school years

The data presented in Figure 6-2 shows that responses concerning the experience of attending Juku comprise a mix of like, dislike and neutral, after the respondents reach the age of seven. Particularly between ages of seven and 15 years, some children clearly dislike their Juku attendance. Some of these were preparing for the entrance examination for junior high school. As junior high school is part of mandatory education, children are not required to take a selective entrance examination if they want to go to a publicly run junior high at the age of 12 (i.e. at the end of primary school). However, private schools require applicants go through a selection process which can be costly in terms of paying for extra exam preparation coaching. As the literature review showed in Chapter 2 (subsection 2.3-3), there is a large gap in the level of study between school textbooks and entrance examination contents (Komiyama, 2000). In this case, children have to study extra hard in order to succeed in the entrance examination and this can make their learning experience tougher as they get closer to the examination. For example, Haruka attended the entrance examination-focussed Juku from her fourth grade (aged 10). She explained that she had told her parents that she wanted to attend Juku for supplementary learning, but her parents enrolled her for Juku classes dedicated to succeed in entrance examinations. In fact, she did not know the actual purpose of attending the Juku when she started.

[Before I knew, I was already there.] Everyone starts like that for the entrance exam Juku. [...] For the entrance exam Juku, I went to several places and tried out. [...] Well, but even so in the end my parents decided which was suitable for me. [...] I was made to do so, in terms of entrance

exam. [...] This Juku was more severe. Also I didn't understand why I was studying such things. (Haruka)

Further, she stated in the interview that her parents did attempt to respect her opinion about which Juku she should attend, but their parental opinion about what was appropriate and effective Juku overruled her preference. In this way, she felt that she was forced to do what she did not want to undertake. In this case, studying for the entrance examination was already hard work, and her sense of being forced into it and having no means to resist her family's decision made it an even more stressful and pressuring experience for her. For Haruka, having the opportunity to express own voice had a lasting impact on her Juku experience.

Despite Haruka's story being powerful, she was, in fact, the only one who really disliked the entrance examination Juku. Other study participants reported that they wanted to take the entrance examinations of their own volition, and saw value in their Juku attendance, because of the difference in learning styles between their school and Juku. In order to be successful in their junior high school entrance, school study was not enough, and they were pressured to pursue a higher standard of studying before the examination, particularly at the end of primary school. Mayu's statement indicates this.

I said [I wanted to go to Juku]. [...] Yes [I wanted to take the entrance exam]. [...] I became to feel the study at school was easy and my school record became really strong, so it was good. In 5th grade I wanted to quit Juku for a while...it was too hard. Bu then I thought to be successful I needed to make an effort. (Mayu)

Considering Haruka and Mayu's quotes, it appears that the preparation for junior high school entrance examination could indeed be stressful. At times, the decision to take an entrance examination was not necessarily made by the children, but by the parents as Haruka suggested. Whether the child had made the decision about taking the entrance examinations, or could voice an opinion in this regard, seemed to matter with regards to shaping perceptions of the Juku experience.

Pressures from high school entrance examination preparation: experience in junior high school years

In Figure 6-2, another noticeable peak regarding when some children did not like attending Juku occurs at around 15 years old, i.e. at the end of grade three in junior high school [9th grade]. Recalling school progression in Japan (see Chapter 2 section 2.1), approximately 98% of junior high school students go on to high school and most children

want, or expect to proceed to the next level. Most public school students have to take entrance examinations for high school, because usually private schools combine their junior and high schools, and there is no need to for pupils to take an entrance examination. Nana, who was in her final year of junior high at the time of the interview, was attending Juku for the entrance examination. She reported:

Not like, not like! [...] All to prepare for the entrance exam. Really do not like it! Really enough! (Nana)

However, she went on to say that she finds Juku useful for the entrance exam, despite her strong distaste for it.

The Juku is much easier to understand. 100 times better. They are really good at teaching [about the exam]. So my degree of understanding is much higher in Juku. [...] In a way I don't dislike Juku. I may say because it is an after school activity, I don't like it. But otherwise, I never thought I would want to go. (Nana)

Mari's quote further stresses that she had to attend Juku, though she was strongly against it.

I was forced [to attend Juku]. I was always thinking that I would never attend Juku, but I was told that because it is the entrance exam period, I must go. So I gave up arguing and went to Juku. (Mari)

From these statements, it can be suggested that Juku attendance appears to be a standard requirement to prepare for entrance examinations. The evidence cited from these children reflects a shared perception that school study is not sufficient to guarantee that they are going to be successful in the entrance exam and it was necessary to attend another institution to study after the school day finished. Nevertheless, because they were aware that most children proceed to high school, they consider high school attendance as more or less mandatory. Due to this awareness, children feel the high school entrance examination is redundant and they are forced to go through the unnecessary pressure surrounding it. This can be seen from Satoko's statement:

I think mandatory education should be scrapped. [...] I mean why is it until junior high school? I want the mandatory education to be until the end of high school. When it's only until the end of junior high school, not everyone can go to high school... (Satoko)

Figure 6-2 shows that no children report disliking Juku in their high school years because the preparation for the high school examination is over and the pressure is off them for a short while during the ages of 16 and 17.

Older children associating Juku attendance with their futures: experience in high school years

The end of high school years shows an increase in children reporting an association between Juku and the future, which is coloured green in Figure 6-2. At the same time, the dislikes reported regarding Juku attendance largely disappear during the high school years. In this period of childhood, it is likely that children turn to considering how they might go about their future lives. As Keiko mentioned, she considers that her gaining entrance to university is a portal to her future self. Keiko points out the following about her Juku attendance.

Well, as a result, we will be able to enter university, then the next [career] step continues, I think it [Juku] is related [to the] future. (Keiko)

Other high school students also stated, in terms that suggest it was an accepted way of thinking, that Juku is useful for realising their future prospects. Mao chose attending Juku specifically for her future as the one she attended was specialising in English teaching and preparing students to go abroad, for example, by providing summer overseas programs.

I want to work at a foreign-affiliated firm. Like Apple and Pixar. Well, with those [companies], I don't know yet what kind of position I want to have, but I want to work abroad. [...] So I said I wanted to attend this Juku. (Mao)

Risako was in the final year of high school at the time of the interview, and aimed to become a nursery teacher. She voiced the opinion that not all school subjects are necessary, but only those that matter for university entrance examination are of any value, and she was studying these at Juku. In fact, for entry to a private university, the examinations are usually limited to covering just three or four academic subjects. From examples such as those given above, it appears that children at the end of childhood utilise Juku for entrance examination purposes. To this extent, some children may be taking responsibility for their lives and exploiting the affordances of Juku for securing the future, particularly when they feel that school study is not sufficient for achieving their goals. In such a way, children may also show their gains in agency regarding deciding their pathway for their future lives. To note, 'agency' in this thesis deploys the definition of autonomy as agency suggested by Beyers et al. (2003), which underlines children's capacity for self-governance, taking into account the elements of context, relatedness and time (See Chapter 3 section 3.1-2). As explored in Chapter 4 section 4.4-2, Fattore's (2009, p.64) model of well-being, which describes agency

as ‘having [...] the capacity to have some control and to be able to exert influence’ is taken into consideration.

Children’s negative experiences regarding Juku attendance

From Figure 6-2 above, it appeared that majority of children like or feel neutral about Juku attendance, or associate it with their future across their childhood. Though they appear to accept Juku, some feel constrained and discontent about it, perhaps because of the tight schedule as explored above. One of the Juku-related issues that stands out is the constraint regarding time spent with school friends. For instance, Yui pointed out that she wishes to have spare time for herself as well as to spend time with her friends.

Aaah, after all I want is time to spare. [...] In daily life I think it’s better if there is some time to spare. [...] When I have Juku, of course I have homework for Juku and school, it’s because I am not using time effectively, but yeah I want it... And also, sometimes I can’t go out to play with my friends, so I want time to play with my friends... (Yui)

From her remarks, it is evident that she felt very pressurised regarding her time use, as she needs to fulfil her duties for school and Juku, all of which crowd out any opportunity to be with her friends. The constraints over time to spend with friends, which is linked to Juku attendance, was also stated by Haruka. She had had a particularly negative experience when she was in primary school.

I wanted to play with my friends. I disliked it [Juku]. (Haruka)

Additionally, children sometimes reported they dislike Juku for its method of teaching. Rin previously had bad experiences at Juku, which confused her understanding of the academic subjects rather than helping with it.

Hmmm... it was difficult to understand. (Rin)

The way the teacher was teaching? (Interviewer)

I think so... well, it was quite a different way from school, so I got confused and didn’t understand well. (Rin)

Rin was not forced to attend Juku, though it was based on her mother’s suggestion. She mentioned she continued attending Juku after looking at the school grades she was achieving. One may consider that if the pedagogical style did not suit her, she could have consulted with her parents and have left the Juku straight away. However, she kept attending the same Juku for three years, until the end of primary school. Similarly, other participants who felt

that the Juku's teaching style did not suit their preference stayed on at the same Juku for one to two years. In such a way, it emerges that it can take time for children to find a Juku of their preference about which they can negotiate with their parents.

Children's normalised and positive experiences in attending Juku

In contrast to the negative experiences described above, the majority of participants felt neutral about Juku attendance between three and 18 years old, and there are some who liked Juku throughout their childhood. Children who liked Juku appreciated the difference between school and Juku in their last years of primary school.

If it's only study in the primary school, there are only basic things in the textbook, so there are not much advanced things... but at Juku, in the textbook, there are also advanced things so I think it will be useful. So what I learned in primary school, I do in an advanced way at Juku. So it is making progress in steps. (Kilua)

Ran said she liked the fact that Juku offered her an advanced level of study and really appreciated the ranking of each student's achievement as a tool of motivating each of the classmates, though this positive view of competition contradicts other children's experiences, for, it must be noted that some children did not like such a competitive environment. For instance, Minnie stated that she changed her Juku from one that was group-based to an individually based service because she was given her ranking and found that being compared with other people and working in competitive environment had been a bad experience. Regarding these three children's discourses, it appears that the environment, for example competitiveness and the pedagogical manner, is important aspect for them when determining whether Juku is an acceptable experience or not. The one distinct characteristic of Juku is that a child and her parents could choose a suitable Juku, specifically one for their own needs. If they do find a satisfactory Juku, as indicated in some participants' quotes, the child's Juku experience tends to be normal and/or acceptable. In this way, children appear to be able to have a say when it comes to parents choosing their Juku.

Another aspect of Juku attendance that some of the participants reported that they liked was the chance to experience meeting a variety of people as well as having various topics to study.

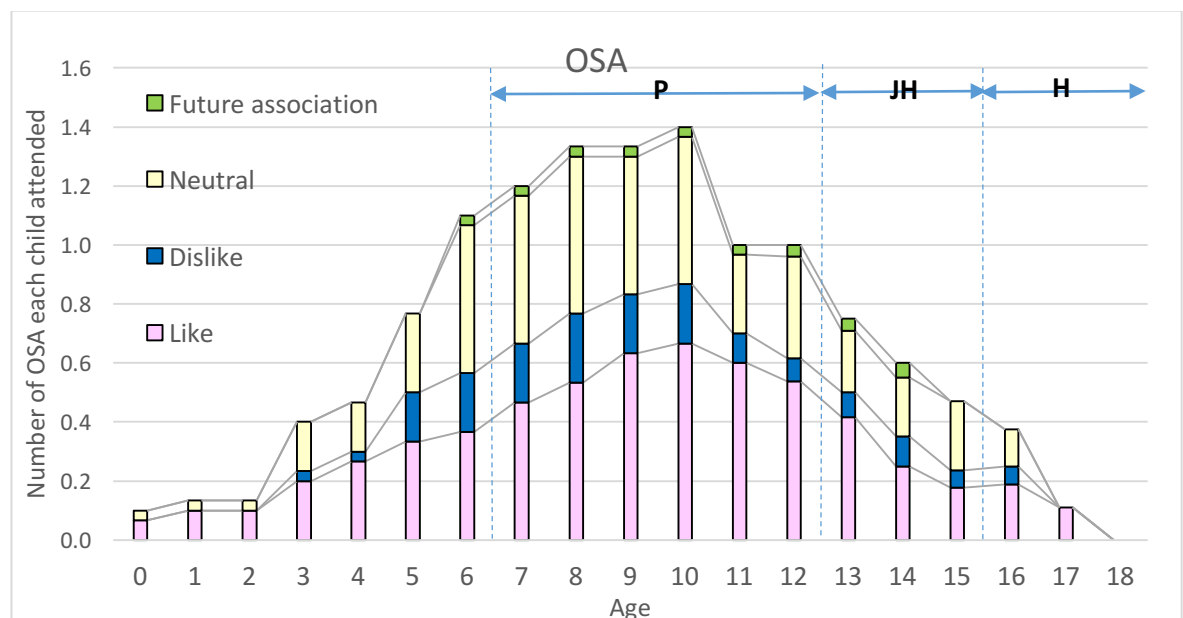
Comparing to school friends, yeah our topics are different as well, so saying that this school's teacher is like that or something like that... That

kind of topic is different as well, so because the topics are different, it gets livened up. (Midori)

Other participants mentioned that being with friends at Juku was motivating, as they shared a sense of working hard together to achieve a similar aim and as Nana pointed out above, the teachers at Juku could also play an important part in making it a positive experience. Some children claimed that the Juku teachers could teach them more effectively so that they came to find it more easy to understand subjects there than at their regular school. This section explored drawbacks and benefits of attending Juku. Here, it is evident that children increasingly attend Juku as they grow older, and they often have to compromise the time they have for attending OSA. The next section will consider children's experiences in OSA.

6.1-3 Out-of-School-Activities [OSA]

Figure 6-3 Children's experiences in out-of-school activities



*P: Primary school JH: Junior high school H: High school

Children's agency in OSA decision making: with examples of piano lesson attendance

This section explores children's agency in making decisions to attend out-of-school activities. As explored above, the number of OSA children participate in increases gradually up to ten years of age. By the time the participants have entered primary school, most of them appear to be involved in some kind of activity, in contrast to Juku, which they started later in childhood. Figure 6-3 shows children's orientations regarding OSA (i.e. activities which do not include studying at Juku) and only a few disliked such activities in their early years. Nevertheless, the detailed timeline data (Appendix 2) indicates that the activity that

the participants did not favour in pre-school, as well as throughout their primary school years, was attending piano lessons. Piano lessons are of interest as they offer an example of children's agency and more than half of the participants have this experience. An interesting characteristic emerged by exploring timelines and children's discourses on the piano-based OSA: though they do not like the piano, many continue with it for several years. Nevertheless, not every child disliked the piano and some did have a passion for it.

To explore the example of the OSA concerning taking piano lessons, some participants started learning the piano, because their parents suggested or made them attend the class. One individual who reported that she disliked learning the piano, Misa, continued with it for seven years from when she was five years old, despite her aversion. Ran also continued to attend the piano lesson for six years, but disliked the extent of practices she needed to do.

I really hated piano. [...] Well, like, I was forced to... continue until fifth grade. [...] I wanted to quit. I was saying I wanted to quit for a long, long time, then I quit. (Misa)

I didn't really want to do it. It was really tiresome. I more or less started attending the piano lesson with my decision but it was exhausting doing it a lot. (Ran)

From the above statement, it appears that it was not Misa's desire to attend piano lessons and she was forced by her parents to continue them. If she did not like the activity, but had to continue with it, then it must have been a significant burden for a long time. In terms of Ran, she 'more or less' agreed starting to attend the piano lessons. Though she did agree to attend the piano lesson in the end, her experience is that she is not fully content with having to attend them. Misa and Ran's statements show, there appears to be a possible tension between parents' decisions and children's agency regarding the OSA attendance in the case of taking the piano classes. However, Minnie's statement below suggests that being forced to attend piano lessons does not necessarily make all children dislike them.

My parents [told me to attend the piano]. When I was three, I didn't want to go, but I was forced to go... [...] But at the piano class, I made friends... so I liked it. (Minnie)

Minnie did not like learning the piano at first, but continued with it for six years. Her quote stresses that she did not have a say in whether she attended, just as Misa did not. However, the social aspect of attending helped her to see her piano classes in a favourable light. For

those who reported that they liked learning the piano, it is of note that not all of them necessarily started it of their own volition.

Some children explained that they had come to enjoy the activity as time passed. One factor that helped them come to like learning the piano was having a good relationship with the teacher. Yui, for example, had a very bad experience in her previous piano school, because the teacher was ‘very scary’. Following this, she changed school and stated that she enjoyed the lessons a lot, as the teacher was a very nice person, and they could share a lot by talking to each other. Conversely, Mayuko had a piano teacher that she liked but this particular teacher moved and thus had to change to another one. The second piano teacher was too strict and did not suit her learning style, and thus she ceased attending the lessons in the end. The importance of a positive relationship with the teacher and other students attending the tuition can be detected from other participants. With regards to piano lesson attendance, the statements from these interviewees indicate that there appears to be a possible tension between parents’ and children’s decisions (agency) about starting and continuing this particular form of OSA. Although there are different kinds of OSAs available for children to attend, Mizuno’s (2001) study (see Chapter 2 section 2.4) highlights the prevalence and significance of piano lessons for young girls in Japan.

As explained above, the proportion of disliked OSA increases from the beginning of primary school years and reaches its highest level at around ten years old. It decreases afterwards between the ages of 11 and 18 years. This may be because children gained agency to negotiate with parents about whether to continue certain OSAs regarding which they had voiced dislike.

Children’s experience regarding constraints in time

At the end of childhood, from 15 years old onward, hardly any of the respondents were still involved in OSA. This feature agrees with the MEXT (2008c) data shown in Figure 2-4 (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-2) which shows an increase in Juku and decrease in OSA attendance from the junior high school age onwards. After 10 years old, the proportion of disliked activities decreases for the following years, and as it emerged above that this may have been due to many children in this study leaving their piano lessons (Appendix 2). Some of the children’s discourses, for example Misa and Ran, showed that after few years they managed to leave the piano class, perhaps with their exercising a degree of agency to achieve their desired goal.

Some comments can be made in relation to this decrease in the dislike of OSA attendance for ages between 11 and 18 years. Firstly, even if they continue doing the activities they like, children may feel under pressure to manage their tight schedule. They may have a densely packed schedule involving several kinds of activities, and at this point school commitments and involvement in Juku may also increase. Some participants reported this aspect.

I'm not doing [ballet] anymore. Well the work for our school festival, and also 11th grade being the top [to take responsibility in school] we have to do an incredible amount of work and have to get decent grades. I started ballet since kindergarten, so I thought I had done enough. (Mao)

In this case, as Mao stated, her schedule became increasingly tight and she felt she had no time for her ballet OSA. Second, because the school curriculum gradually becomes tougher over the years, there appears to have been a trade-off to be made regarding the value of non-study related activities, and so the time spent pursuing these might need to be reduced.

I used to learn piano, but from fifth and sixth grade, my study became busier and got immense, so I quit it. (Miyuu)

As Miyuu explained, many of the participants' reasons for not continuing their OSA activity was due to the increased volume of study at school, which they judged to be more important, given the limited hours they had each day. Third, the addition of participation in school clubs from the latter part of primary school is often mandatory. Because it is an additional mandatory activity taking place during after-school hours, school clubs can tightly pack the children's schedules, on top of OSAs and Juku. It appears that some children tend to choose similar kinds of activity in school clubs as they were engaged in for OSAs. This is an effective way for children to manage time, by substituting the OSA activity with their school club membership. For example, Countrymaam used to attend a gymnastics out-of-school club.

[Among OSAs,] I liked the gymnastics the most. [Gymnastics] is fun. I remember I was looking for a [private] school where I could do gymnastics. (Countrymaam)

On entering her school, she became a member of the gymnastics club and left the out-of-school one. This allowed her not to overload her schedule by continuing OSA, the school gymnastics as well as attending Juku. In such a case, school clubs substitute for the OSA attendance, which potentially allows the pace of the schedule to be relaxed a little.

Despite above data about the constraint in time, children persistently perceive Juku as a normalised activity, and, more significantly it is acceptable to have a very tight schedule.

Adults always say 'ah busy, ah busy', but it seems they have less tasks than us [young people]. Sure they have to do things. But I think the seriousness of 'having to do' is different from us. Because we have future, really if we don't work hard, our future will be destroyed. But my father and mother have lived decently already, so it might be tough but I believe they don't have unbearable life as they say. [...] But being busy like now is also fun so I also want high school and university to continue forever. (Mayuko)

6.1-4 Overview of timeline analysis

This section explored the variation in children's experiences based on the timeline data and the related discourses captured in the interview data. It became clear that the experiences differ according to the different stages in their childhood. For example, children at the young age seem to have recognised the after-school activities as normalised activities, while this may not be the case later.

It emerges from the timeline data and the interviews that there are two underlying reasons for attending Juku: one is to supplement school study, which is often imposed by parents when children are younger, and the other is to prepare for junior and senior high schools and university entrance examinations. Some children dislike Juku attendance across their primary and junior high school years, due to the high pressure for the entrance examinations, and being forced to attend certain Juku for the preparation, largely based on their parents' decisions. However, it would appear that some of the high school participants had begun to associate it with the realisation of their future plans. Older children, as seen in Haruka and Mao's narratives, actively make their own decisions with respect to Juku attendance to achieve their objectives, as was evident in these children's association of Juku to their future. In terms of the OSA, a particular characteristic emerged: children tend not to like piano lessons, but continue them for a long period of time. Overall, children do like OSA, but increasingly give them up as they grow older in order to attend Juku.

6.2 Case studies

The above section explored children's experiences in after-school activities by drawing on timeline data and relevant discourses. Though it provided us with an insight into the time spent in after-school activities and some of the drivers for participation in certain ones, their extensiveness and their position in children's daily lives remain unclear. In order to shed

light on children's daily practices, four case studies are presented. The participants are first divided into two age groups: younger children aged 11 to 14 years (P5 to J2) and older children between 15 and 18 year olds (J3 to S3). They are also divided between those who attend public and private schools (Table 6-1).

Table 6-1 Case categorisation

	Public	Private
Younger children (ages:11-14)	Pianist (12years old), 6 th grade [P6]	Rin (13 years old), 7 th grade [J1]
Older children (ages: 15-18)	Hanako (16 years old), 10 th grade [H1]	Mayuko (16 years old), 11 th grade [H2]

P: Primary school J: Junior high school H: High school

Each case covers some personal background, time-related and time-usage data and extracts from the children's interviews. Timeline data are shown in tables with several rows, because children are engaged in multiple activities simultaneously. Moreover, these show only the number of activities and not the duration of each activity. Time-use data are included because this varied a lot depending on the person and her days and is a useful way to look into children's daily lives in relation to after-school activities. Below, the cases of the younger children, followed by those of older children are considered, after which, the overall picture is addressed.

6.2-1 Younger participants

Timeline data for the younger participants: Pianist and Rin

Table 6-2 Timeline: Pianist (12 years old)

School							Primary school						
Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
							Kumon (Japanese, Math, English)						
					Piano					Piano			
										Calligraphy			
												One-to-one Juku	

Pianist (Table 6-2), attended a public primary school, and was in 6th grade (aged 12) at the time of the interview. The interview took place during her summer vacation, and she was

preparing to take an entrance examination for private junior high school. In terms of Juku, she attended *Kumon* (公文式), also she was taking piano and calligraphy lessons, as well as one-to-one Juku. As it can be seen in her timeline, she began attending Juku (*Kumon*) in her pre-school years. She stated that it was her mother’s decision for her to attend both types of Juku. She explained that the reason for attending both Jukus was to increase the probability that she would succeed in the junior high school entrance examination. However, her actual time at Juku was narrated in a way as to show a rather negative overall experience.

[The one I don’t like is] [pointing at the one-to-one Juku]. Because they [teachers] force me to do self-study here. [...] I am [too tired as if I am] broken [at the end of the day]. (Pianist)

However, because she desired to be successful in the entrance examination, she continued attending the Juku.

I continue [Juku] because I am taking the entrance examination. I decided to do so. (Pianist)

For other non-study related activities, she said she enjoys them and started them under her own volition. As her pseudonym suggests, she loves to play the piano.

Well, if I had a bad day, if I play the piano, I can forget everything, something like that. (Pianist)

From her quote, it is evident how playing the piano takes a key part in her life to balance her daily feelings. Additionally, she reported she wanted to receive an award in calligraphy, and to do this, she was willing to practice hard and continue with it. Yet, she was not satisfied with her life overall, due to the volume of study she had to do.

I’m not [satisfied with my life]. [If I put it in one word,] ‘I don’t like studying’. (Pianist)

Table 6-3 Timeline: Rin (13 years old)

School							Primary school							Junior High
Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
							Chorus							
							Cheer leading	Painting						
							Baking class							
													Juku	Juku

Rin (see Table 6-3) attended private junior high school, and was in 1st grade (aged 13) (7th in overall school years) at the time. She was a member of the basketball club at the

school, but was taking time off due to an injury. She has been going to the chorus group and baking class since she was seven and ten years old respectively. Formerly, she was involved in the cheerleading group as well as the painting class. She started chorus following her mother and grandmother's suggestion, but for the other non-study activities, she said that she wished to begin taking part in them.

For the chorus my mother and grandmother suggested me to start, and for cheerleading I thought I wanted to do. Also I wanted to try painting. [...] Also the baking class [I wanted to]. For Juku, my mother said 'why don't you try attending once in summer at least', then I went, and afterwards it's been in relation to my school record. (Rin)

Despite that initial desire to take part, she ended up leaving both cheerleading and painting due to the intensity in her daily schedule. Regarding the cheerleading, the amount of after-school time became limited as she grew older and consequently, as she commented, she did not manage to continue with it.

About cheerleading, the higher the school year became, the more the time I come home from school has changed, and then in the end I couldn't manage to go there anymore, so I had to give it up. (Rin)

In terms of the painting, she felt that the school study was getting tough.

It became busy for the entrance examination, I wanted to increase the number of times I attend Juku a week, so discussed to leave the painting class. (Rin)

In sum, she reported that the restriction in her time came from both school and after-school activities.

As for Juku, she had experience in attending two different Jukus, one in the latter years of primary school, and the other after the beginning of junior high school, which she was attending once a week at the time of the interview. For the first Juku, as shown above, her mother suggested attendance. While she continued attending it for three years, she disliked the first Juku because of the considerable difference in methods of teaching between her school and the Juku. Due to this large gap, she ended up getting confused and understanding less at the Juku. Thus, she decided to leave the first Juku and changed to her new one.

One of the interesting features in her interview is her belief that smart children would not attend at Juku.

I feel... well, yeah lucky about attending at Juku... Well, those who don't attend Juku, they are smart so it might be fine, but at my...my level, I think it's tough without it, I can't do it by myself... I have this imagination that they (smart people) can study effectively, so I imagine they don't go to Juku but do it all by themselves. (Rin)

She then explained her school life, suggesting the position of Juku for supporting her school life.

At school, if it's subject that Juku doesn't teach, like a science experiment, I ask questions, but if something like Math, I think 'aaah I have to prepare for next class! Oh, well, it's fine, I can ask questions in Juku'. (Rin)

In this way, it seems that the existence of Juku makes her hesitant to be more engaged with school teachers, knowing that there is support available at Juku. Overall, she stressed that she did not like studying, but felt the need to attend at Juku to support her study.

Time usage: the two younger participants Pianist and Rin

Table 6-4 shows above two younger children's time use on the days when they have after-school activities both on weekdays and weekends. The table shows that both children have similar amount of sleeping time. Their schools start and finish at around the same time for Pianist and Rin, but Rin wakes up an hour earlier than Pianist. Attendance time for Juku is earlier for Pianist than Rin, and Pianist's Juku finishes even before Rin starts her class. These differences are probably because Rin attends a private school, and has to commute for a long time to and from school. At the same time, though, Pianist goes to bed an hour later than Rin. To this extent, both manage to have similar amounts of sleep. Nevertheless, Pianist stated that she was always tired.

I'm always exhausted! It's like I'm torn into pieces! (Pianist)

So why do you continue all these after-school activities? (Interviewer)

Because I'm taking entrance exam. (Pianist)

Rin was feeling content with her time-use, because she had created the opportunity for extra time by leaving the basketball club, which occupied her after-school hours. Additionally, Rin deliberately wrote 'afterschool at school', which indicated her playing with friends and doing self-study at school library.

When there is no school, I say I want to go to friends' house. Then my mother says I can do so if I study. [...] Usually I stay at school after the classes and go to the library to study or talk with my friends (Rin).

In her interview, her friends appeared only in the school context and school day-offs such as during the weekend and holiday. Perhaps, if she wants to be with her friends, she needs to stay at school, which delays the time at which she leaves for home. In this case, both her space and time to be with friends are constrained to the school context.

Another difference that can be identified from their time-use data is that Pianist does all the activities on school days. Rin, on the other hand, does two of the three activities over the weekend. This difference may be due to the contrasting ways in which public and private schools operate, but this cannot be verified from the time-use data, and they did not talk about their lives explicitly in relation to type of school.

Table 6-4 Time-use: Pianist and Rin

	Pianist (age 12, P6)				Rin (age 13, J1)			
	School + Juku	School + Piano	School + Kumon	School + Calligraphy	School + Juku	School	Weekend + Chorus	Weekend + Baking class
0-4								
05:00								
05:15								
05:30								
05:45								
06:00								
06:15								
06:30								
06:45								
07:00	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up				Wake up
07:15								
07:30								
07:45								
08:00							Wake up	
08:15								
08:30								
08:45								
09:00	School	School	School	School	School	School	Free	Baking - 12:00
14:30								
14:45								
15:00								
15:15								
15:30								
15:45								
16:00				Calligraphy				
16:15	Juku	Piano						
16:30								
16:45								
17:00								
17:15	Self study		Kumon			After school at school		Free
17:30								
17:45								
18:00								
18:15								
18:30	Home							
18:45								
19:00						Home		
19:15								
19:30								
19:45								
20:00								
20:15								
20:30								
20:45								
21:00	Study	Study	Study	Study		Study	Study	Study
21:15								
21:30								
21:45								
22:00								
22:15								
22:30								
22:45								
23:00					Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
23:15								
23:30	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep				
23:45								
24:00								

Note: It shows the time-use of the days when children had after-school activities.

6.2-2 Older participants

Timeline data for older participants Hanako and Mayuko

Table 6-5 Timeline: Hanako (16 years old, H1)

School							Primary school							Junior high			High
Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
							Kumon								Juku		Brass band
											Swimming						

Note: It shows the time-use of the days when children had after-school activities.

Hanako (Table 6-5) attended public high school, and was 16 years old at the time of the interview. She was in the first year of high school (10th grade), and the previous year she had passed the examination to enter the school. She was in a brass band club in junior high school, but was a member of the drawing club in high school. In terms of the afterschool activities, she attended *Kumon* and swimming in her primary school years, and admission Juku⁹ in the latter part of junior high school. After entering high school, the only activity she took part in is the community brass band group. As for *Kumon*, she does not remember how she started it, and feels that it functioned as a part of her normal everyday activities. For all other activities aside from *Kumon*, she had decided to participate.

When I was in the primary school, there was a swimming class. But I couldn't swim at all. It was such a bad state. So I thought I needed to do [practice], and told my mother about it. (Hanako)

The peculiarity of her timeline is the gap in activities at the age of thirteen, which is the first year of junior high school. In the interview, she explained that she decided to leave both activities because her school club involvement became busy. Instead, she began subscribing to a correspondence course, for which she received textbooks every month and sent in quiz papers for assessment. Though she was motivated to complete it, she did not manage to do the study material by herself, and felt the need of someone's support. Thus, she started attending Juku to receive extra support.

I left Kumon because when I became the first year student of the junior high school, the school club started. Kumon gives out homework, but [because of the school club] I didn't have enough time to do it. So [I shifted

⁹ Admission Juku is a Juku where children and young people prepare to take entrance examination for desired schools and universities (see section 2.3).

to do] the home studying. Like 'Challenge'¹⁰, by Shinken seminar. [...] Other friends around me started to enter Juku, and also I piled up 'Challenge' undone. I didn't do it ['Challenge']. (Hanako)

Her admission Juku attendance was for preparation for the high school entrance examination. She had two main reasons why she chose to do this. Firstly, friends around her started attending Juku, and she felt the need to do the same. Secondly, the system for the examination was changing from the year she was entering high school so in order to be better informed about the new system, she considered Juku was the right choice.

I got to know that the entrance examination system was changing. So I thought it was better to enter Juku. (Hanako)

Her experience at the Juku was positive, largely due to the 'good environment'. Environment for this child covers three aspects: atmosphere, effectiveness and relationship. For the first, atmosphere, she felt that Juku was her second home.

Juku was very good. I felt like I was at home. Like, it was my second home. (Hanako)

For the second, effectiveness, she thought Juku was very useful for learning subjects effectively and to have a better understanding of them.

I think because I was attending Juku, I was successful in the entrance examination. So I think it was thanks to the Juku. I was more like those who don't study, so I think Juku taught me the trick to and how to study. [...] At school everyone proceed altogether, so it's not really about how individuals are doing. Juku also proceed altogether but teachers also teach us individually, so I think I got hang of studying. I think it was useful. (Hanako)

Now that she no longer attends Juku, she sometimes feels that her past Juku teacher may have explained much better than the school teachers. The third situational aspect she liked at the Juku was being able to develop her relationship with the teacher.

Oh, the teachers were friendly, and looked after me very well, so I felt they think about me a lot. [...] School teachers also talk to me as well, but yeah, how can I put.... About studying, it was not like they give me advice, so I thought they (Juku teachers) were specialists. (Hanako)

¹⁰ 'Challenge' is a correspondence course provided by *Shinken seminar*, which is run by the Benesse Corporation.

This quote shows that the forms of interaction between teachers and students are different between school and Juku. Hanako stated that she did not seek educational advice from the teacher at school and she did not like some of the school teachers, because she felt they did not capture students' insight well.

Despite her fondness for Juku, she decided to discontinue her attendance. Nevertheless, she commented that she would need to restart Juku attendance when she was in the second year of high school (11th grade) to prepare for the future. For the time being, she was satisfied with taking part in the brass band only, where she enjoyed interacting with adults and gets to know future life that may await her. Being part of the brass band with adults rather than people with similar age not only allows her to continue music but also extends her insight into the adults' life for her to mature as a person.

In the brass band, most people are adults. There are no one whose age is close to me. I am the youngest. Then I hear complicated situations [between adults], and I imagine 'oh, that kind of thing awaits me'. So in a way it is a good knowledge [shared with adults]. (Hanako)

Table 6-6 Timeline: Mayuko (16 years old, H2)

School							Primary school						Junior High			High		
Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
				Piano										Juku (Math)				
											Juku (Individual teaching)				Juku (English)			
														Flute				

Mayuko (Table 6-6) was in the second year of high school (11th grade), and was 16 years old. Mayuko was at a private school, which she had attended since kindergarten. She was in the school orchestra club but she was due to leave it at the end of her 11th grade. Her junior high school is attached to the high school, and the school club consisted of students across only five years because the 12th grade did not participate in order to prepare for the university entrance examination. She felt a lot of responsibilities over the orchestra, as she was in the final year.

I am taking a break from the flute class, because I am very busy with the [orchestra] club. But when I leave the club in October, I will restart attending the flute class. (Mayuko)

She started taking the piano lesson when she was three years old, and continued it until 14 years old. Among all her after-school activities, she said she particularly did not like the

piano lessons. In fact, she liked it at first but there was a change of teacher, which affected her experience drastically. Despite her dislike for the piano lessons, she continued because her mother kept convincing her that all the effort put in up until then would have been a waste if she dropped out.

I said I wanted to quit [the piano lesson]. But then I was told 'but you continued with effort'. Then I thought 'that's true'. But then I thought it was not for me, and said about that [to my mother]. Then she said 'if that's what you want...' In final three years, I was like 'aaah!' It was a bit...[tough]. (Mayuko)

Meanwhile, she had started attending the flute class as she wanted to be prepared for the school club at her junior high school. She was taking a break from flute lesson at the time of interview because her school club was too busy, but was planning to restart the flute once she left the club.

In terms of Juku, she was attending supplementary Juku between 9 and 14 years old; however, she did not talk a lot about the experience there. Instead, she talked more about the Juku activities that she was attending at the time of the interview. She was attending two Juku, one for Math and the other for English. Math Juku attendance had a purely functional purpose. She only wanted to have more mathematical exercises, rather than being tutored by teachers. Moreover, she considered that having to travel to and from this maths Juku was very tiresome, and she did not expect much benefit to come from it. On the other hand, she associated the English Juku with her future as she wished to study business abroad and promote an enterprise. This Juku she attended was, as she explained, specialised in supporting students to learn 'useful' English rather than an examination-bounded form of the language.

I thought 'TOEFL! I need to study for TOEFL!' Then I found this Juku near my house. It's like 'I need to go abroad!' [...] I didn't really want to stay in Japan for long time... since around third year (P3) I haven't liked Japan. [...] At my school we don't have an opportunity to do Listening and Speaking with native people [so it is useful for my future]. [...] I made a lot of friends at the English Juku! Yes, it's so much fun! [The topic of conversation is] on school days, because I can complain about school to these friends, we can talk about the future, and also about private lives, something like that. (Mayuko)

She appreciated the speciality of the Juku, and found it useful to have friends there with whom she could share thoughts on their shared future aims. To achieve her aim, she felt the need for training in her English skills, and found the appropriate Juku to support it.

When I ask about something that needs permission, they [parents] usually don't say no to what I decided. When they say no to me, it's difficult because all of us are stubborn. But in the end they say yes. In the end they say yes so I think it's okay [that my opinion is heard]. (Mayuko)

Furthermore, she considered that the school study was of no use for her future, such as classical Japanese. From these points, it seemed the participation in Juku was making her question the importance of school study of certain subjects.

There is no opportunity to get familiar with native speakers' English in listening and speaking. There is a native teacher but he is not good. (Mayuko)

Time use of older participants

Table 6-7 again shows the time-use data of Hanako and Mayuko on the days when they had after-school activities. As stated above, Hanako was no longer attending Juku so she wrote about her time-use for when she was attending Juku in the final year of junior high school. Similarly to younger children, the child from the private school (Mayuko) wakes up and leaves home earlier than the public school child (Hanako). Some previous studies suggest that the distance and travel time to attend private school are much longer than for public school (Aizawa, 2005). Considering that Mayuko leaves home even before Hanako wakes up, it can be assumed that the distance between home and school was much further for Mayuko than for Hanako.

Looking into Hanako's time-use data, she had had a very tight schedule in the past, during her final year of junior high because she had to prepare for and take the high school entrance examination. For example, she studied at Juku for four hours on average everyday, in addition to taking part in her school club. Reflecting back on the time when she was preparing for the entrance examination, she stated that she did not know how she managed to do it all.

I was living with the motivation [to pass the entrance examination]. (Hanako)

After successfully entering her desired high school, she left Juku, and had much more free time than before, which she could allocate to going to brass band practice which she considered to be a hobby.

Mayuko was a year closer than Hanako to graduating from high school and attended Juku at least three times a week. Her time-use data shows that she spends most of her Juku time studying English. As described above, the extent in terms of time of her commitment to

attending Juku is clearly related to her possible future. As she also stated in the interview the position of attending Juku with respect to her life is associated with working to realise her dream to leave Japan. Moreover, it is linked to her beginning to question the purpose of some of the topics she is forced to study at school when she feels they have little to do with her contemporary or future self.

Table 6-7 Time-use: Hanako and Mayuko

	Hanako (age 16, H1)			Mayuko (age 16, H2)	
	School + School club	Brass band (Sunday)	School + Juku	School + Juku (English)	School + Juku (English) + Juku (Math) on Saturday
0-4			Sleep at 3		
05:00					
05:15					
05:30			Wake up	Wake up	Wake up
05:45				Prepare	Prepare
06:00					
06:15			School		
06:30				leave home	leave home
06:45					
07:00	Wake up				
07:15					
07:30					
07:45					
08:00					
08:15					
08:30					
08:45					
09:00		Wake up			School (Until 13:00)
14:30	School		School	School	
14:45					13:00- Juku (Math)
15:00					
15:15					
15:30					
15:45					
16:00	School club	Free			
16:15					
16:30			School club		
16:45					
17:00	Home				
17:15					
17:30					
17:45				Leave school	
18:00	Dinner				
18:15					
18:30					
18:45					
19:00					
19:15					
19:30		Brass band			
19:45			Juku		
20:00				Juku (English)	Juku (English)
20:15					
20:30					
20:45					
21:00					
21:15					
21:30					
21:45					
22:00					
22:15				Come home	Come home
22:30					
22:45					
23:00			Dinner		
23:15					
23:30					
23:45			Study		
24:00	Sleep (at 1)				

Note: Cell coloured in blue is time use for past.

6.2-3 Overview of younger and older children's time-use data

This section focused on four case participants and their time-use experiences. All children¹¹ had particularly long days, comprising school, after-school activities and self-study time. In addition, their time-use data showed the extensiveness of the time spent in preparation for the academic entrance examinations, especially in Hanako's case. When she was preparing, she used to wake up very early in order to study before school hours, as well as participate in the school club. Pianist was also planning to take an entrance examination for the junior high school, and had a lot of activity participation, alongside self-study. From these cases it emerges that these entrance examinations have a significant impact on the daily life of children. Here, it is apparent that entrance examination has a large impact on children's lives.

By focusing on the everyday experiences of four participants, some interesting features emerged in relation to the position of Juku in children's lives. One of them is the different dynamics in relationship between children and school and Juku teachers. Rin's case suggested that receiving support by the Juku teachers made her hesitant to be engaged with the school ones. This can be an implication that children's school lives may be, in fact, taken over by Juku from young age with which interaction with school teachers is undervalued. In case of the older children, they associate the Juku attendance with their future. Hanako was not attending Juku, at the time, but was also sure that she would start it again as getting closer to the tertiary education. Mayuko was more purposive in attending the Juku, based on its speciality and the relevance to her objectives. For this reason, she was rather fond of the Juku, because of her passion for the future.

6.3 Children's future perspective in relation to the present time

The above findings indicate that there may be a perceptual change in the effect of Juku attendance from it impacting on the child's present to it impacting on their future lives. That is, younger children attend Juku for their day to day schooling needs experienced in the present time, while older children begin to orientate themselves towards their future career aims. However, it is not clear yet whether the younger children themselves are associating their present and future lives overall, or they internalised such conception through experiences of Juku attendance. This section explores the data regarding children's

¹¹ In case of Hanako this is in relation to her past Juku attendance experience.

perception of time in relation to their present and their future, and their association to their Juku experiences.

In the interviews, children were asked to consider whether the future is bright or gloomy. About half of the participants were in younger age (between 10 and 14 years old), and most of them said that the future would be bright. Meanwhile, the older children (aged between 15 and 18 years) in the other half said that the nature of the future depended on them and what they did. Younger children stated the following:

I think it [future] will be bright. [...] Because if things are fun, then I imagine good things...like good luck will follow it [fun] one after another. (Miyuu, 12 years old)

Future... I imagine it will be bright. Putting it bluntly, it seems fun. (Yukari, 13 years old)

Future will be bright. [...] Because now is not gloomy. (Lico, 14 years old)

The younger children appear to consider that the future entails fun things and accordingly, it will be bright. On the other hand, Shin, Haruka, and Keiko, who were 15, 16 and 17 year-olds respectively, considered that what the future holds depended on them.

[Whether it will be bright or gloomy] depends on me. Well, whether it will be gloomy or bright, I think it will change depending on my behaviour from now on. (Shin, 15 years old)

I think it will change depending on how I maintain the frame of mind. [...] Hmm but I think I haven't challenged anything so I want to try not to make it gloomy. (Haruka, 16 years old)

Future... well my characteristic is trying not to think about gloomy things... so there are things that bother me but I try to think that it all depends on me. (Keiko, 17 years old)

As can be seen, 'depend on themselves' appears in older children's discourses, while younger children's consideration about future is associated to fun thing awaiting them. Concerning the difference, it seems that the perception of time changes between younger and older children, from time controlling children to children controlling time.

When children talked about their own future, they were additionally asked about their dream or desire for their adulthood. Younger children often talked about their desired career in terms that suggested the career would happen effortlessly.

Hmm one of the aims is to continue doing gymnastics, but it will be impossible when we become grandparent's age, so I can be PE teacher of my school. (Futaba, 10 years old)

Because I like drawing, I think I want to be a cartoonist. (Midori, 11 years old)

Aaah, right, I like animals a lot. So, for example, [I want to be] an animal trainer, or something that I can relate to animals, if I talk about a job. (Yui, 13 years old)

Older children seem to have struggled in identifying their desires for the future.

I have nothing [that I am aiming at]. I want to go to university, but [...] I don't know anything [about future]. (Dee, 16 years old)

My mother always tells me off as well but I really don't know which university department I want to enter or something like that. So I don't know what I want to be, and I don't know the future. It's like I'm wandering. It's like 'what should I do!' (Misa, 16 years old)

Dream...hmmm dream. Like, at university and beyond university, I kind of want to study psychology or law... that kind of subjects. But I don't know how it can be connected to job. [...] Well at least I feel I won't go through the path to work at big company... (Keiko, 17 years old)

Comparing younger and older children in this respect, the latter are clearly more uncertain about specifying what their future being may be. It can be suggested that younger children have an abstract idea of the future, which they cannot control but have a positive idea about. For instance, Pianist instantly stated what she desires to be in the future.

I think it will be a little bright. [...] I want to be a pianist. (Pianist, 12 years old)

Mari, who was 16 years old, had more down to earth idea about the future and struggled to identify her desire.

The VAT will increase right?¹² And the newspaper says there hasn't been an increase in people's income. So VAT increases, the amount of spare money doesn't change... That means I can't go out! So I'm rather worried about future. [...] I don't know what I want to do in the future. I'm worrying about what to do. (Mari, 16 years old)

It may be that younger children are far enough from the reality of life in the future that they are able to specify their desires whilst older children who may be developing a sense of

¹² At the time of the interview, VAT in Japan was changing from 5% to 8%.

control or lack of it regarding their own future, are expressing doubt about what they may manage to achieve in their lives. This aspect can be observed from these older children's difficulty when questioned to identify a specific desire for their futures.

Shirai's (2004, 2006) studies (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1) highlighted that hope diminishes as a child grows up as she comes to face reality. Moreover, the child experiences the enlargement of his/her time perspective into the future, rather than having a focus just on the present. In light of this, it is worth looking at children's perception of Juku study in relation to the future. In the interviews, the participants were asked whether they considered Juku study useful for their future life. In response, many younger participants considered the Juku study useful for their current school study.

I think, yeah, it will be useful. School doesn't teach us in detail. Nothing like, 'you should do like this'. They don't teach us rule or something like that. But the Juku teaches that in detail, so for sure I think it will be useful (Midori, 11 years old).

When I see those who do not attend Juku, they can't keep up with others. [...] School is where questions about studying are made. Juku is a place to solve them. (Yukari, 13 years old)

Juku study is effective for current school study, first of all. Then it will be useful for proceeding to next school level. (Rin, 13 years old)

Education is certainly related to a person's future outcomes, and thus any study in which a person is involved should be considered as an investment. Nevertheless, younger children appear not to associate their current school study with their future life and accordingly, Juku study is not considered in this way by them either. Their school study had a great impact on their quotidian life so these younger participants similarly viewed Juku within the same timeframe.

A slightly different perspective can be identified in the comments given by older children, as can be seen in the following statements.

By meaning that I can enter in the university, and that will lead to the further future, I think it (Juku) may be associated (Keiko, 17 years old).

Yes, [I think Juku study will be useful in the future]. It depends on subjects. (Risako, 18 years old)

Keiko is conscious about her future, and considers that university entrance is the key portal for it. Thus, it appears natural for children to consider their future university entrance by choosing the appropriate classes when they start attending Juku so deliberate choosing of

appropriate Juku to prepare for university entrance examination is a strategic action. Consequently, a lot of older children stated that many subjects that they were taught at school were not serving any useful purpose. There are, of course, some children who think that no study is a waste of effort. All the same, many respondents put their priority only on those subjects that could be relevant for university entrance examination to achieve their desired future beings. For example, Risako, who wanted to become a nursery teacher, reported:

I think Japanese will be useful. [...] Well, because I want to do something related to children, I wouldn't use scientific subjects right? In that case I wonder about English as well [whether it will be useful]. So the only one left is Japanese (Risako, 18 years old).

Her statement explains that by getting closer to making a decision for the future, she considers some subjects that she has to take at school not useful. Instead, because she supplements the core subject that she would need for her target career, she considers Juku study helpful. Haruka and Mayuko are also certain that not all school studies are useful for the future.

It depends on subject [whether it will be useful for the future or not]. English will for sure be useful, but math won't be. (Haruka, 15 years old)
Aaah, well I don't think so [that school study is useful for the future]. Especially geography. [...] Japanese history is for sure not necessary, I can't understand why we need to study Japanese and Chinese classics, modern Japanese is also not needed for me, I don't need to be able to write Kanji (Chinese characters), for university I have this Juku anyway... (Mayuko, 16 years old)

From quotes such as the above, it appears the more these children approach the transition from childhood to youth, in terms of approaching the end of their formal school attendance, the more they put a priority on their Juku study.

Another respondent, Misa, aged 16 reported that she was not sure regarding what she wants to do in adulthood. Moreover, her comments raise the issue of learning English.

I think the Juku study will be useful for school... Well, English will be useful for the future if I become to be able to use it. (Misa)

This emphasis put on learning English may be a result of the national curriculum and policy discourse around creating the next generation. In order to keep up with the internationalised world, the government considers English is a must-have skill for children, for contemporary youth will make the future, which already is a globalised world community (MEXT,

Ministry of Education Culture Sports Science and Technology). For this reason, the term ‘global’ appears often in recent policy documents, which stress English language as an important investment. Following this governmental policy discourse, parents may consider English skills to be important overall, a view, which may in turn, be passed on to the children. There may be a difference in understanding the underpinning reasons regarding why English can be useful between the government, adults and children, but it seems that its importance when preparing for the future is an ideal shared across the generations.

Last but not least, it should be recalled that all the participants in this research were girls. As discussed in the context and methodology chapters (chapter 2 section 2.5 and chapter 5 section 5.2-4 respectively), it is likely that some tension awaits girls in their adulthood. That is, they may have to make choices between pursuing career choices and family lives. This raises the question as to why girls may spend a large amount of time at Juku, which is an investment for the future, despite there being possible tensions. The study participants did not directly address gender-related perspectives, which could have been due to their abstract idea about the future especially for younger children. In this respect, it is still reasonable to probe the data to consider gender-related perspectives.

For instance, Hanako stated that her decision on career continuation would depend on how much effort she had managed to put in by the time she needed to make this choice. In her case, her decision-making rests on not her present but her future self.

Oh yes, I do want to get married. About work? Can I continue... Hmm, I wonder, how it would be? It's quite far in future... I suppose, by the time I get married, if I put so much effort and I did my best, I would think it's fine [to quit the job]. Whether I would become housewife... but in that case also I would have to do house work. In that case maybe I should continue [working]? I can't decide! (Hanako)

This point can be considered in the light of previous studies that suggest the almost insignificant presence of gendered perspective for high-school students. As was highlighted in Chapter 2 (see section 2.5), Kimura (2009a), Tsutsumi (2012) and Ueno's (2012) works concluded that the interests regarding career opportunities are similar between women and men until the final year of university. This consideration fits with Hanako's account but it does not mean that a gendered perspective is insignificant. Unless exploring the lives of boys as well, it is arguable whether there is one or not. It is possible to argue here that at this life

stage, the future may not be an apparent concern for children and so as the gender-related tension.

This section explored children's perception of time especially focusing on that of the future in relation to the present time. It appeared that when children are in transition from childhood to youth, they tend to put priority in study at Juku than at school. In this case, children may consider it is normal to attend Juku, which for them often demands they study until late at night. This aspect relates to the notion of *Gambaru*, the data for which are set out below.

6.4 Gambaru

In order to explore further the participants' perception of past, present and future, they were asked what kind of words they would give to themselves five years ago and five years later. In relation to this question, participant children often referred to a particular word: *Gambaru*. *Gambaru*, as discussed in Chapter 3 (subsection 3.2-1) refers to a Japanese concept that signifies people making an effort. Some participants stated the need to *Gambaru*, as can be seen below.

Twelve... years old [five years ago]. I would say something like 'Gambare (be in a state of Gambaru) for the entrance examination'. [For five years later,] are you gambare-ing (be in a state of Gambaru) the university life? (Minnie, 17 years old)

In case of Minnie, thus, the effort is directed toward studying. In another example, *Gambaru* is used slightly differently:

[For five years ago], whatever happens, be Gambaru. [...] [For five years later], hmmm, do Gambaru by remembering 10th grade. (Countrymaam, 17 years old)

In Countrymaam's case, the direction to which the *Gambaru* is made is unclear. If one may try to specify, it seems the notion of effort is applied to some experience that was a kind of hardship. In both quotes, *Gambaru* is applied to their past, present and future. For Minnie, *Gambaru* was concerning studying for the past, while for the future, it is applied to university life, which refers to experiences beyond just studying for a degree. Countrymaan mentioned the tenth grade in particular, as it was the most difficult time she had had in her childhood but where she managed to come through her difficulty with her efforts. Based on this experience, she considers that if she could manage to get through that particularly tough time, she should be able to manage other things as long as she keeps making the effort.

Returning to Steger's (2006) study (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1), because *Gambaru* is a subjective concept she claimed that there is a tendency towards downgrading of the quality of accomplishment. Rather, the amount of time put into expending effort is valued, which, in turn, makes Japanese people work for long hours in order to succeed in, for example, education and business (Gender Equality Bureau, 2007). In fact, Mayuko mentioned the significance of time related to her *Gambaru* as follows.

I want to Gambaru a lot. Really a lot, I want to Gambaru. But I can't. I suddenly lose motivation. [...] Hmm, I do work hard when I manage to, but then I see [the clock] and I think 'oh, I've worked for two hours wow, wonderful! I suppose I can stop it for now'. (Mayuko)

Mayuko's quote shows a sense of regarding significance of the quantity of time rather than that of the quality of output. Certainly, she may be working very hard within the two hours, but her quote does not show the sense of achievement in finishing the work per se, and instead, the time spent is used as an indicator to show the amount of effort put. For most participants, the amount of time spent studying is considerable and the time-use data analysis highlights the concerning characteristic of there being a lack of time these children have for their personal lives, eg. for playing and/or simply relaxing, which they can manage as they want. However, children themselves and their parents may consider that they are making an effort which is the most important criterion, and tiredness that results from participating in after-school activities and/or having a tight daily schedule such as that observed in Pianist's narrative above, may be a small price to pay.

Associating these findings with studies conducted by Fujita (1994) and Ueno (2001) (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1), it can be said that children's '*Gambaru*' is extended beyond scholastic discourse and spreads to that of personality. They appear to consider that they should be always in a state of '*Gambaru*' whenever possible, but without necessarily having a clear idea of what they are making the effort for. The unclear objective for which they make the effort is situated in the future and it is reasonable to suggest that a large amount of present time is expended in working towards the vague future.

6.5 Themes emerging from timeline and time use

The above sections probed how children's experiences in after-school activities may vary across the duration of childhood, and how children with different profiles, such as whether they are young or old, or attend public or private schools have different stories. Considering the above narratives, it can be suggested that the crucial factors which come into play and

have an impact upon their Juku experience include the children exercising agency in making their own decisions and knowing the purpose and meaning of attending their after-school activities. Further, some key themes are emerging from the findings which would lead to further exploration in the next chapter (chapter 7) with respect to children's well-being.

First, it became apparent that children increasingly have a constraint regarding time as they grow up for they are time poor, in other words, they experience time poverty. Specifically, the demands of study lessen the time they have for themselves. In relation to their increasingly tight schedule, the OSA attendance tends to gradually become a secondary priority. Juku attendance concurrently increases, because studying becomes the priority for children. Children's time poverty may also disrupt their personal lives, such as their relationship with their friends.

The narratives demonstrate that if a child began attending Juku from an early age, it was often based on her parents' decision, as a follow up to an unsatisfactory school record. Starting Juku attendance from early age seems to make Juku a normalised activity, or something a child feels she should attend by her internalising the need for Juku attendance. However, regarding OSA, sometimes children do participate in decision-making, but piano lesson attendance, which was a common activity for these female participants, may be an exception. It can be suggested from the data that the children gaining the opportunity to have a voice can influence their experiences regarding after-school attendance.

The notion of having a sense of duty is closely linked with agency. As was seen above, parents often make their children attend Juku in order to supplement school study and gain better educational results. This may be seen as an investment (see chapter 2 section 2.4 and chapter 3 section 3.1-1), because parents do not want their children to be left behind in classes and do want them to be successful, both in the present and the future. Juku-attending children appear to consider this educational supplementation as essential to prevent them falling behind. From the data the perspective adopted for many children is that 'I must attend Juku' rather than 'I want to'. The questions, however, remain regarding to whom is the sense of duty held and how can agency be expressed and/or exercised when the children are living under this sense of duty.

The time-line data and children's discourses showed that the social relationship aspect of their after-school activities is one of the crucial factors that influence children's experiences

across childhood. Children stressed the importance of the role played by teachers in the after-school activities. When the relationship with the Juku or OSA teacher was good, the experience tended to be favourable. On the contrary, the after-school activity experience deteriorates if the relationship with the teacher is poor.

Finally, future aspect has emerged with regards to Juku attendance. Even if younger children appear not to associate it with their future, it is ultimately an investment oriented towards the future (see chapter 2 section 2.2 and chapter 3 section 3.1-1). When the younger children's time perspective does not appear to be associated with their future, it may create a difference in the original purpose of Juku such as supplementing current school study and attempting to enter in prestigious school, which for the younger ones, is often their parents' decision. Conversely, children of an older age largely linked their Juku attendance with their future plans. For these participants the narratives show that there is a smaller gap between the purpose and perception of Juku attendance held by the children and those of their parents.

6.6 Chapter summary

This chapter looked at children's experiences in after-school activities throughout their childhood, from ages 10 up until 18. From the timeline data analysis there appears to be variation in experiences according to the life stages in childhood. Moreover, five themes emerge in relation to the experiences: constraint, agency, sense of duty, social relationship and futurity. Among these, constraint is a significant aspect, as children who attend after-school activities appear to have to endure significant time poverty. That is, owing to their tight schedules and intense work-loads, children have little time to spend with family and friends.

Children's discourses reinforced the notion of *Gambaru*. In the children's narratives it was evident that some may study or work for long hours to show the amount of effort they are putting in, even when, if the truth be told, the task could be completed in less time. To this extent, children may feel it is satisfactory to have to work a long day, in order to show their amount of effort, despite their real sense of intensive schedule. In the next chapter the exploration of children's daily experiences leads to consideration of what may contribute to their well-being.

Chapter 7 Exploring children and young people's worlds

7.0 Introduction

Chapter 6 established how children experience after-school activities including Juku and OSA particularly with time-related data as well as their time perspective in interview discourses, such as *Gambaru*. Based on the preceding findings, this chapter considers wider aspects about what position Juku takes in children's lives and well-being, and what role it takes in relation to their school attendance with children's discourses in interviews and eco-maps as supportive data exploring their relationships in life-spaces, which correspond to the main question and sub-question 4¹³.

From the analysis of the interviews and with a support of eco-maps, the relationships with people appeared to be one of the most significant aspects to emerge during the interviews when the children were talking about their overall lives and well-being. Thus, relationship serves as lens to explore children's lives in this chapter. Section 7.1 briefly reflects on children's relationships drawn in the eco-map that they drew during the interviews, which subsequently leads to an exploration of children's perceptions of space in section 7.2. Section 7.3 then looks at the Japanese notion of *Ibasho* that emerged from children's discourses, which appeared to be closely associated to their relationships with other people. After the discussion of *Ibasho*, sections 7.4 to 7.7 explore children's lives in relation to core life-spaces, such as the home (section 7.4), school (section 7.5), OSA (section 7.6) and Juku (section 7.7) through the lens of relationships. Following the exploration of each life space, section 7.8 looks at relationships across the life spaces. Finally, interview revealed that relationships are also fundamental factor that actualises children's well-being, and section 7.9 explores this aspect.

7.1 Relationship features from the eco-maps

During the interviews, children drew an eco-map to explore their relationships with people in each lived space, such as their home, their school, their Juku and OSA and the

¹³ Main research Question: How children perceive Juku attendance in relation to their life and well-being in urban Japan

community (see Chapter 5 section 5.2-2). The research method also adopted eco-map drawing to make the interactions between the participant and myself a fun experience. Despite expectation for usefulness of the eco-map as a data collection tool each child utilised it differently, making it difficult to have general idea of children's relationships from the data; for example, what kind of friends they have at school and the closeness with them. For this reason, this section does not examine the eco-maps in detail, but gives a general overview of children's relationships as presented in them. Two prominent characteristics emerged from the data: first, the apparent disappearance of children from communities, and second the centrality of families in their relationships. For the former aspect, most participants did not specify anyone from their community on their eco-maps (see Appendix 4¹⁴). The small number of participants who did specify people in the community indicated relationships with friends of a similar age, but did not include adults. In this case, children appear to be detached both from communities overall and the adults within them. Regarding the centrality of family, almost all participants positioned family as the most important relationship and/or they felt very close to the members. Below, this aspect is discussed later section 7.4 which explored significance of home for participants, but for now it is worth noting that families have a high significance in children's lives. Although only two clear characteristics emerged from the eco-map, this data suggests that diverse relationships emerge in different life spaces¹⁵ for children. Thus, before moving to a discussion of children's lives in detail, the next section looks at children's perception of life spaces.

7.2 Space

In Chapter 3 (see section 3.2-2), the changes in children's spaces were explored and this was found to present increasing spatialisation and institutionalisation of their lives. For this reason, the present study assumed that different spaces would provide diverse experiences for children. In the interviews, children talked about their life-spaces in relation to their preferences, sense of security and *Ibasho*. The notion of a sense of security includes experiences in terms of both bullying and general safety, such as safe and unsafe spaces and

¹⁴ Appendix 4 Eco-map data shows all the eco-map data gathered from participants.

¹⁵ In this thesis, 'space' and 'place' are used interchangeably. However, their difference also remains to be recognised following Rasmussen (2004).

Space: It is more abstract than place, and can mean only geographical area.

Place: It is a space with a meaning that is attributed by people through experiences.

encountering danger. *Ibasho* is discussed separately in the later section, as it is a fragile notion and requires thorough consideration.

In terms of preferred places, children raised the concept of private spaces, such as home and their own rooms as their favourites, because these spaces allow children to relax and to be themselves. This preference in turn indicates that children are not able to relax elsewhere, and have to act as someone else other than when they are at home or in their own room as Nana said below.

Place I like... home probably. It is calming. Really calming. Because I'm not seen by anyone (but family), it's calming. It's like I can be myself.
(Nana)

Nana stressed in the interview that family and friends matter a lot for her. This feature can also be observed in the survey on perception of space for primary and junior high school children conducted by the Cabinet Office (Directorate General for Policies on Cohesive Society, 2014b). In this survey, most of the children found home a place to be at ease.

One of the reasons for the children's desire for relaxation could be their time poverty as explored in Chapter 6. On the other hand, the need for a space to be oneself appears to be a consequence of the characteristics of relationships at school, which section 7.5 explores in detail below. Some of the respondents showed a strong desire for time in which they do not have to worry about anything. Risako and Dee stated the following.

I like my room. Because I can relax. (Risako)

[My favourite place is] my room. I don't know exactly why but it's calming. I am by myself there. It's comfortable. (Dee)

Dee said that she considers her family and friends are important in her life, and the mobile phone as a tool to connect with them is essential. Nevertheless, she likes to be alone in her own room. Charice also put an emphasis on the relationships with people in her life. However, she reported that she needs time to be away from them despite her fondness for them.

I like to be with other people, but in the end, I need to be alone a little. Otherwise, I get tired. (Charice)

Their accounts mirror the work of Erving Goffman (1959) who argued that face-to-face interaction of human beings involves a performance, which is dramaturgical or theatrical. An individual makes a choice regarding performance based on the impression of the other person who is present. At the same time, she has to follow the order of established

relationships so as not to damage her character established to the others. This performance takes place in the present interaction, but the establishment of a child's character to others was made in the past and aims to maintain the impression of the self, for the future.

In contrast to those who like private spaces, some, for example Haruka and Yui, preferred spaces where they could have relationships and/or engage in certain activities, such as their school, classroom, the school ground and Juku.

My favourite place? I like the school playground. It's really beautiful. It feels good there. It's relaxing. I do stupid things with my friends there (Haruka).

Aah, the most favourite is the school clubroom. But also my home where I can relax. I like clubroom, like, I like the time practicing [the musical instrument]. (Yui)

For these kinds of spaces, involving and not involving people, having harmonious relationships with other people appears to be the central concern for some children. This aspect is also explained by their least favourite places, as these are associated with bad or problematic relationships as Rin and Midori explained below.

Place I dislike... hmm I really can't stand the living room after an argument. (Rin)

I don't like classroom. Well it's about when I was in fourth grade, well also now in fifth grade, the relationship between boys and girls are so bad. We are fighting for space. So, like we can't do what we want to do [because of boys]. (Midori)

Bad or problematic relationships refer not only to a relationship breakdown, but also to arguments between people and someone's intrusion in a private matter. The teachers' room was not an uncommon example here. For example, it was raised by Risako and Countrymaam in regards to others do not respecting their privacy.

It's not like I hate it. But I don't like others listening to what the teacher and I are talking about. You can hear things close-by right? We are talking about my future and why they need to hear our conversation! We sometimes talk about the university that I want to go. But it's too close to other people. (Countrymaam)

The teacher's room at school [is my least favourite place]. When I enter there when a teacher and a student are talking about something, I feel bad. (Risako)

From these points, maintaining the respectful harmony of spaces with regard to their relationships with other people appears essential for these children.

In terms of security in spaces, it is important to explore this aspect regarding the high rates of bullying reported among children in Japan (185,035 reported cases in primary, junior high and high schools in 2013) (MEXT, 2014b) (see Chapter 4 section 4.3). Many participants stated that previously there was bullying around them, but it was no longer happening and not an issue anymore. By focusing on the security in terms of the safety of the space, home emerged as the safest for the majority.

[Safe place] would be home [as the same reason for liking home] (Nana).

Safe place, right. I think it would be home after all. My home is in the housing complex, and each house is attached next to each other. [...] So, because they are attached to each other, and because there are big gardens, I think it will be difficult for a thief to come in (Midori)

Thus, their idea of security is not only associated with the physicality of the space, but with the relationship with others, particularly family members, and the eyes of their neighbours. By contrast, when it comes to insecurity, children consider a space is unsafe when they are away from public gaze, for example, in lonely and dark places. The participants of the research were particularly prone to encountering unsafe circumstances as Juku sessions for many finished late at night. In such a situation, children and their families tried to ensure they avoided the potential danger; for instance, by parents picking them up from Juku or from the nearest train station. Despite these efforts, some of the participants had had unpleasant experiences on the street at night.

On the way home from Juku, once I've been stalked. That was scary and that was unsafe. [...] I don't know since when he was stalking me, but he followed me until my home door. That was unsafe, and I was really scared. (Haruka)

At night, there are street lights, but it's dangerous. There are not many people, and sometimes there are delinquent people and I felt it was dangerous. [...] I don't want to choose that street, I don't have a burglar alarm but my backpack, and that's why I don't want anything to happen. So I choose to go home using different way from my friend. (Midori)

A dark street at night without people heightens the possibility of encountering danger, but it also occurs in daylight.

In summer when I was in 6th or 7th grade, I was molested once. What's more, it was daytime! Then I realised it's not good. This place is unsafe. [...] It's not a kind of thing you get used to but it was first time. Little after that I realised what happened, I looked out for that guy and he was on the bike, wearing helmet. I tried to see the number, but he ran away so couldn't see. That time I didn't really have anyone that I was close to, and didn't know whom to tell this. I couldn't tell my parents neither, so in the end I didn't tell anyone about this. (Mari)

Mari's quote shows that daylight is not enough to ensure security. Half of the participants' schools were distant from their homes and they commute by public transport. In such circumstances, they could be more exposed to the possibility of danger, which was also addressed in Chapter 4 section 4.3.

Unlike the majority of participants, two girls stated that there was no safe place, as Japan was subject to earthquakes. For some other participants who stated that they thought there were safe places, this notion was also associated with safety from earthquakes and tsunami, such as getting under a desk, getting to evacuation sites and reaching the top of hills.

I would say everywhere is safe but if consider this carefully, nowhere is safe I think. (Misa)

There are sometimes cases [where criminals are running away]. In that case, I imagine maybe roadside is actually quite dangerous. Even if I am at home, if there is an earthquake it can also be dangerous, too. So I think there is no such thing as a 'safe place' anymore. (Hanako)

My home is a safe place. We [my family] were talking about what we should do when there is an earthquake. Then my parents told us that it's fine to stay at home, explaining the plan that's implemented in our flat complex. Then I understood, like ah it is seventh floor and we don't have to worry about tsunami. I heard tsunami comes quite high but yeah [seventh floor will be safe]. Yeah [the Tohoku earthquake was scary]. Because we are expecting a Kanto [her region] earthquake, and we don't know when it will have, I am scared of it. (Kilua)

For the study participants, they were aged between eight and fifteen at the time of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, and it appeared to still be a vivid memory. Thus, in light of the intensity of that recent national natural disaster, the need for security seems to be associated with earthquakes for some children.

This section has explored children's perceptions of their life-spaces in relation to preferences and the security. It is evident that relationships with other people, attainment of one's own space, and the eyes of the public are crucial aspects that the children associated with spaces. This aspect offers some resemblance to the notion of *Ibasho*, and thus in the following section the place of *Ibasho* in children's lives is probed.

7.3 *Ibasho*

7.3-1 *Ibasho* in children's lives

Chapter 3 (see section 3.2-2) identified from the existing literatures that *Ibasho* is a particular Japanese notion. Quickly reviewing the concept, *Ibasho* refers to 'a place that means something for oneself respective to his social relationship' (Takatsuka, 2001, p.40). Since the children's discourses associated space and relationship, *Ibasho* can be a useful means to explore their lives and perspectives as a basis to consider about significance of relationship in later sections.

The concept of *Ibasho* is variable but it is well understood by the respondents. Owing to its ambiguous nature, the children were first asked where was *Ibasho* for them and while exploring the notion, many identified not only physical space but also people. More than half of the children stated that home was their *Ibasho*, while answers varied for the other half. Some examples of the responses are given next.

My Ibasho? Where can it be... home? (Miho)

[Ibasho is] my home. (Pianist)

It's home. Well, actually it's everywhere. (Misa)

Among the participants, six of them said that *Ibasho* could be found in various places, rather than in a specific place. This variation suggested by them appears to be due to their association of *Ibasho* with people. For instance, Futaba said that her *Ibasho* is about 'being with everyone'. The examples of *Ibasho* for these other participants were friends, family, and the people they liked.

*[Ibasho] is at various places. If there are people, then that is my Ibasho.
(Shin)*

Hmm, Ibasho? Friends and family [are Ibasho]. (Dee)

It's where my favourite people are. (Charice)

It may well be that the significance of physical space partially disappears when the respondents turn to focus on people, unless they clearly stated that their home and school constituted *Ibasho* for them. In this respect, for some children in the study, *Ibasho* appears to go beyond the definition given by Takatsuka (2001) above. Moreover, home and school, when cited as their *Ibasho* could be understood to be places linked to close association with personal relationships with family members and friends. These dual aspects of *Ibasho* comprising both physical space and relationships can be seen from Mao and Nana's quotes

below wherein it appears that physical space by itself cannot constitute *Ibasho* for the notion, to be complete, requires people.

[Ibasho are] classroom and my room. But when I say classroom, it's not an empty classroom, but everyone is there, I am there in classroom, and when these are completed, [it becomes Ibasho]. Also, there is a school festival committee room, there are many pieces of work from before, there are paints everywhere, and if I go there, I feel a relief. It's like my Ibasho, where also past senior students spent time...(Mao)

Wherever I can relax [is Ibasho]. Ah! And where there are people. I don't like to be alone. So if someone is there I will be alright. (Nana)

Furthermore, *Ibasho* is not something that a person is free to decide, but mutually decided by and with others.

The first is family (as Ibasho). The second...I hope it is at my friends. (Hanako)

Isn't it the school club? Like, I think if it is a class, even if I disappear everyone can keep going. [...] The other day I was told (at the club), "you must be here otherwise it's no good! (Countrymaam)

At first, Hanako is certain that her *Ibasho* is her family. However, for the second example she hopes that includes her friends, but she is not certain if this is so. In this respect, she desires her friends to agree that they are Hanako's *Ibasho* rather than just her believing they are. In the case of Countrymaam, who was the leader of the gymnastic club at school, she could acknowledge that the school club was her *Ibasho*, because of the other members' comments that they need her to be there for them. This sense of being needed made the gymnastic club her *Ibasho*. Taking Hanako and Countrymaam's examples into consideration, it appears that *Ibasho* requires not only place and people, but also mutual understanding with the individuals in it. It must be noted that this understanding is not made orally, though in Countrymaam's case she was told by others that she belongs there. In this sense, some children could become anxious when wondering whether they and the other people that they have identified are sharing the same understandings about their mutual situation.

7.3-2 Significance of *Ibasho* for children

Shifting attention to the meaning of *Ibasho* for the children, the discourse related to place returned in some participants' narratives, in contrast to the centrality of people highlighted in the above section. More specifically, some mentioned themselves as a central consideration for the concept of *Ibasho* rather than other people. Hanako, whose comments were noted earlier, stated that her *Ibasho* was constituted mainly of people, such as her

family members and friends. For her, the discussion of physical place disappeared but later in her story the idea of place is returned with a reference to herself: ‘I’.

What is Ibasho... Right, well there are times I have to be attentive, but it is a place where I feel fun, or rather, I don't feel distressing. (Hanako)

To this extent, the mere listing of *Ibasho* makes her consider about her position in relationships, but the meaning seems to bring in one's (in this case Hanako's) experiences in situated settings and spaces. This aspect can be observed in the appearance of subjective reflection, denoted with comments such as ‘I have to’, and ‘I feel’. Similarly, Haruka and Yukari's considerations of the meaning of *Ibasho* are related to what the individual experiences as a self.

Well, when there are people not close to, both of us feel awkward, then that is not my Ibasho [...]. My Ibasho, it's like a place I am not making myself up. [...] It's a place I can relax. (Haruka)

Ibasho...is where I can express myself as I am. (Yukari)

In the above, the physicality of a place and the child's experience ‘I am not making myself up’ enter the discourse. Haruka was certain that *Ibasho* meant something associated with relationships with other people, but above all, her feelings and a sense of self mattered. In other words, the subjective aspect of a person becomes central to *Ibasho*, but also in association to her relationships with other people. As was explained in Chapter 3 section 3.2-2, *Ibasho* is a significant issue for Japanese children, which entails the danger of experiencing the ‘absence of the self’. To sum up, this could be an explanation of the children's anxiety about *Ibasho*, in that they are not completely certain where it is. It appears that *Ibasho* consists of self and relationship with others, which is fluid in its existence due to a variation in relationships.

7.4 Core life-space: Home

As the above section showed, by drawing on the information captured in the eco-maps, families are central to children's relationships. For instance, most children in this study seemed to take having good relationships with families for granted, because for them it was natural to be close to their families, and it formed the basis of their lives. Mari and Neko said they have experienced emotional distance from some of their family members, but the significance of the family as a whole was still prominent.

Until the end of final year of junior high school, I was really scared of my mother for some reason and I couldn't talk with her well. Despite the fact that she is my mother. (Mari)

The evidence assuring children that they have good relationships with family members include having conversations and watching TV together. Even if they have arguments, they know that they can make up soon after. In this respect, the time spent with family members is a hallmark of the quality of relationship. However, some participants reported that they did not have much time to spend with their family due to time poverty, which emerged in Chapter 6 as a key theme regarding children's lives. It is not only children affected by this poverty for fathers often work until late and their siblings, if they have any, also take part in after-school activities such as Juku. Thus, each family member appears to be experiencing time poverty, for which one of the reasons could be the Japanese notion of effort: *Gambaru* (see Chapter 6 section 6.4). Generally speaking, many families do not appear not to have time to spend with each other because of other commitments, not because each prefers to spend time with other people or does not like being at home. Nevertheless, even if they do not enjoy real time together, a mutual understanding is achieved with each family member through talking and exchanging words. This fosters good family relationship for children such as Charice and Mao:

Everyone does whatever preferred things, and the time to go home is all different between us, but even if we pursue things separately, we are united. (Charice)

[Our family is] close. With family, for example, [we spend time together] eating out. When my father is late to come home, it can be three of us [with mother and brother]. But often my brother has Juku or I have Juku so there is hardly time when all family get together at night. (Mao)

Despite children's assertion that families have good-quality relationships overall, they have various perceptions about each member. For children, parents appeared to be the most influential people in their lives, and they recognised parents as their role models. Further, through the children's discourses related while they were drawing eco-maps, it became apparent that mothers and fathers were perceived and valued differently (see Appendix 4). More specifically, mothers or pets are often the members whom they favoured or had a good relationship with the most in the family.

Hmm, rather than I like my cat, well, she is capricious. Because she is cat. But I feel like she understands me, though she can't speak. (Countrymaam)

Some children explained that they did not feel very close to their fathers. One potential reason to account for this difference between mothers and fathers is that the children have more frequent interactions and stronger ties with mothers and it emerged that this was not the case with fathers. For example, Minnie said she feels distant from her father, as “*there is not much occasion to talk to him.*” Some others made the following comments:

I don't really talk [to father]. (Minnie)

Hmm, my father nowadays... [I'm not sure if I like him]. There is no reason but I don't really like him. He is bothersome. (Miho)

Again, this may well be caused by the lack of shared time spent at home for fathers and their children. If children in the study reported that if they have any concerns or worries they would talk to their mothers and/or friends. Thus, in the family setting, mothers are the ones to give support or help, which, again may be partially due to fathers being away from home for long hours of work, as suggested by Misa.

Only my mother is at home. [...] I eat dinner with my mother [because others are hardly at home]. I ask my mother what she thinks, then she tells me her opinion and then suggests me to make own decision based on it. [...] I always think my mother's advice is amazing (Misa).

Hence, there is a mismatch in the lived time between the various family members, while mothers remain available to a child. Due to the frequency in their interactions, children feel that mothers are the ones who give them emotional support as well, such as confidence and motivation as Futaba and Neko state below.

My friends [give me confidence] ... and also mother does so. (Futaba)

Hmm, well, after all when my mother and sister encourage me, that becomes my confidence or something similar to that for me... Like, I can realize that I have some merits. (Neko)

In return, mothers would appear to have considerable power over their children, because they tend to get more involved in their lives. Mothers' power is seen the most often in children's decision-making processes, and mothers tend to take a lead in making decision as Misa and Yukari said below.

My mother expresses her opinion so strong that in the end I need to follow her decision. (Misa)

Hmm, my parents make decision. Especially my mother does that. But she values my opinion, too. (Yukari)

This is not fully against children's expectations, as they seek their mothers' advice even if they want to make own decisions.

My parents have a half [of authority to make decisions]. I sometimes become anxious [if I do not consult to them]. (Countrymaam)

If it's about myself, then I make decisions. But sometimes I consult to my mother... Well, there are also times when my mother makes decisions. [...] [My opinions are] taken into concern... Well, I talk to my mother, so she makes decisions by taking my opinion into consideration. (Yui)

Well, first I try to make decision by myself, like I decide 'I want to do this'. Then I ask my mother afterwards, and she gives me 'ok' then I can do it. So yeah decision is made through parents. I do make decisions but if they say no then I understand that I can't do it. (Nana)

As seen from Countrymaam, Yui and Nana's quotes, both parents are involved in decision-making but their mothers tend to take a lead in this. Misa for instance said that there was never a time her mother's advice was wrong that she appreciates it. Thus, it appears that children are aware that mothers (and fathers) have better knowledge to make decisions in comparison to themselves.

In terms of the other members of family, some participants referred to their siblings and grandparents. Children accepted that arguments with siblings are not a sign of good relationships, but these participants were convinced that they did have good relationships because they are able to make up quickly and laugh together after the quarrel has been resolved. As for grandparents, not all the children reported having frequent interaction with them; however, for those who did, the children explained they had significant attachment to them. Grandmothers and grandfathers assumed different roles, just as with parents, mothers and fathers had specific positions. For example, Keiko spend time with her grandmother: they go out shopping or do various activities together, and enjoy the quality of the time spent together. Contrarily, grandfathers act as spiritual guardians, even though they do not necessarily spend time together, perhaps because some grandfathers are already deceased. Both Rin and Pianist's grandfathers passed away recently, but they perceive an inner connection with them.

Who gives you confidence? (Interviewer)

That is... he's not there anymore, but I like my granddad the most, so... (Rin)

When I see the face of my grandfather who passed away [in a picture], and when I remember in my heart that everyone is cheering for me, I gain confidence. (Pianist)

To sum up, recalling the exploration of preferred spaces for children that appeared to be home and own room (see section 7.2 above), they liked these spaces because they could relax without being concerned about presentation of the self. In this case, families seem to allow children to have a break from relationships with people outside home to whom children feel they need to ‘fit in’. To relax by not concerning the eyes of the others, children seem to favour home and family as their *Ibasho*. This section has explored how children see their relationships with their family as a whole and with each member. It became clear that even though most children consider they have a good relationship with their families, they lack time to spend with some family members. This seems predominantly due to the difference in time spent at home because, for example, fathers work and children attend after-school activities until late at night. It alternatively means that spaces other than home take fundamental part of children’s lives as core life-spaces. These include school and after-school activities, and the following section first explores children’s experiences in school.

7.5 Core life-space: school

Above indicated that school and after-school activities are part of core-spaces in children’s lives. This was carried forward in this chapter where children expressed how they valued relationships with friends especially in association to those they met at school. In this section, children’s school lives are probed with a focus on their personal relationships with friends, in which they appear to feel a need to maintain the collective harmony due to the prevailing school pedagogy in Japan.

7.5-1 ‘Friendship’ at school

In overall life but especially in school context, friendships appeared to be a positive matter for a large number of children and they influence the quality of life significantly. As was seen earlier in relation to *Ibasho*, many of the participants referred to school friends as important. For this reason, children shared the opinion that they thought friends helped them realise their happiness, as can be seen in Haruka and Yui’s quotes.

I need friends for my happiness... and my tennis racket! (Haruka)

Like, going to Disney Land with my friends in the summer holiday, and play with them, or go somewhere with my family... Well, when there is good relationship with my friends, [I feel happy]. (Yui)

When children refer to friends, especially in the school context, several ways were used by them to identify friends as they used terms such as close friends, classmates, people from the same grade or the club. Regarding this, the concept of friendship and its inclusiveness varied between the participants:

I am always with this particular friend as two. We are together in the school club. When we were in third year of junior high school, we were in same class, and then also in the first year of high school. At first we didn't spend time together but since we've been in the same club, we started to be together all the time. (Misa)

As can be seen from Misa's quote, taking classmates and friends as an example again, the former has a sense of formality, while the latter entails the spontaneous generalisation (Mayo, 1945).

In terms of close friends, it was evident that it was important for children to have close friends in the same class to enhance their school lives. For example, Miho previously had a difficulty in school life because she was separated from close friends with them being in different classes. The separation forced her to spend most of the school hours alone.

For the class [allocation] last year, I was separated from my friends. But there was no one I felt I could get along with in the class. So I was alone in the class last year. (Miho)

However in Yukari's case, she had benefited from being separated from a certain friend.

Ah, there is this girl. Now we are in different classes. But since primary school, it was often the case we were in same class. I really don't like her. (Yukari)

Thus, the certainties that one has friends and the allocation of class members appear crucial to maintaining the quality of school life.

7.5-2 Role of class in the school

It is worth recapitulating here that the term 'class' does not mean a subject-related group of students that is seen in the British monitorial education system (see Chapter 2 section 2.1-4). In effect, Japanese students spend most of their school time in their homerooms, which functions to foster a collectivity and this classroom becomes a significant space for children in their daily lives as can be seen from Dee and Mari's quotes.

I like school! Because the mood of the class is good and everyone is close to each other. It's not like we make friends group within [but close as a class] (Dee).

*The current class is so much fun that I don't even want to go to school club.
When I was in junior high school, I loved school club and I hated the class.
(Mari)*

When considering a 'class' in the context of Japanese education, thus, it is important to remember that it functions as a small community of its own within the larger school community.

7.5-3 Negative aspects of friendship and the need to read the *Air*

A focal point in the above section was that children strongly see positive aspects in friendship, yet some mentioned its negative sides. Not all the relationships with friends take place perfectly well for all, as Miyuu and Misa stated:

This friend [pointing at the eco-map] ... is full of lies. Whenever she says 'I am like that and that', I always wonder 'really? Are you?' and I can't really believe her. (Miyuu).

There are one, wait, two girls that I don't like in this 'dislike' zone [on the eco-map]. I suppose our personalities do not match. (Misa)

Thus, it is natural that children have friends they do not favour, because there are differences in interests or they used to be teased or bullied by them.

Specific negative aspects of friendship that emerged in the interviews are the occurrence of arguments and unavoidable negotiations even with close friends. In terms of the negotiations, for the participants it involves an inner conflict between their desire to present themselves as harmonious persons among the group of people, as well as pursuing their own autonomy. When children talked about how they imagine others perceive them, some feared that they might be considered unable to sense the situation and grasp the atmosphere.

*The part that I don't like about myself is that I don't have an ability to take action, I can't read the *Air* and I can't be attentive. [...] I care about this because sometimes what I say doesn't read the *Air*. [...] Plus, I often don't realise about it so it's even worse. My friends tell me afterwards via Line (chatting application) and then I go "what? Seriously?" (Shin)*

Here, Shin stated that she cannot 'read the *Air*'. As Chapter 3 (section 3.2-2) explored, 'reading the *Air*' means to sense the situation between people in the same space, and it entails a certain level of pressure to agree with the mass. This pressure appears to be the strongest in school classes than in any other situation. Once children are allocated to the class, they have to spend long hours in the same place for at least a year, which can be seen in Mari's quote.

At school it [friend group] is the most important. I can't live without them. The class overall has good relationship now, but there is going to be class change soon right? And it doesn't necessarily mean that we [friend group] will be together in same class right? I am anxious. Very anxious... (Mari).

In this period, the shared understanding among the classmates builds up through shared experiences, and 'the *Air*', seemed to become a consolidated power over the members. This feature resembles the presentation of self which was identified in relation to space in the above section. Applying the notion of '*Air*' to the consideration of home as a relaxing space, it can be assumed that spaces outside home are filled with condensed '*Air*'. Moreover, the intensity of the *Air* issue seems to be more particular for girls' relationships rather than those of boys.

[If an opinion is imposed,] sometimes I can answer back... Well, if it's with boys, I can definitely say back, but with girls it's.... [Difficult]. It's because with boys, we talk but we are not always together. With girls, we are always together with friends to talk to. (Kilua)

Kilua's statement shows that there are different kinds of relationships between girls and boys and she feels she needs to consider what she can and cannot say because they stay together. From this, it is not to say that there is no *Air* among boys, but it appears to be more intense among girls. Consequently, some children tend to make barriers regarding limiting relationships with some friends, although they value friends and consider that having them is essential in their lives.

Hmm, with friends, I have fun, but I think 'I should not go further'. It is fun, it's fun but I put shield between us [with girlfriends]. (Rin)

For Rin, friends are very important in her life, but she cannot be fully open to them, and feels the need to be aware of which issues can and cannot be shared with them. Some participants did think that they are, and are able to be completely open towards friends, but they also often attempt to present themselves in a way that makes them acceptable to all others.

With friends... I don't feel hesitant to them. Well, even if I say 'this is secret' to them, I say things knowing that they would say it to others.... [...] Hmm, school friend group is important I suppose. If I go to school and they are not there, that would be lonesome, but then if it's school holiday like in summer and I can't see them, it doesn't matter much. [...] I would say I am more open to friends about personal matters at Juku. (Mayuko)

Mayuko thus feels different levels of openness to friends at different spaces. Her examples between school days and summer holiday show the importance of friends in constant school days where the direction that *Air* takes may become increasingly intense day by day. In such

context, collectiveness may accordingly become dense that being alone can be something to be afraid for children as Mayuko stated above.

7.5-4 Children's strong fear of becoming alone: 'Bocci' phobia

The sections above have so far stressed the significance of friendship and the maintenance of harmony in the Japanese childhood. Put in another way, some of the children expressed a noticeable fear of not having friends. In Chapter 3 section 3.2-2 the notion of *Bocci*, which means being alone, was mentioned. Among children, *Bocci* is understood as something distasteful.

When I am at school, I'm with my close friends throughout. (Hanako)

Would it be difficult if they are not there? (Interviewer)

Yes, otherwise I think I would be Bocci. (Hanako)

Bocci is difficult? (Interviewer)

It is difficult. (Hanako)

As can be seen, having close friends, who often are members of a friend-group, is the key for not being or feeling alone.

[If the group is gone], my life would not be realised. (Futaba)

It's not that I have to be with someone wherever I go. For me a person not being able to leave school alone is tiresome. But that doesn't mean that I don't [belong to a group]. I think I would be anxious if there is no specific friend group, where I can be back. (Keiko)

Futaba and Keiko shared the idea about friend-groups in that these act as a home to return to. This sense of 'must-have' friends to be around them was very intense across all the participants.

Some, however, did not feel the need to be with a friend-group at all times. For example, Mao said she was proud that she is able to leave school and go home or to attend Juku alone. Despite this pride, she strongly fears being alone during the school lunchtime and this is not acceptable for her.

Friend group is important, but I am all fine [to be alone]. For example, there are two ways to leave school. Then if I choose one way and the friends choose the other way saying good-bye, I am fine. I can be alone. [...] Eating lunch is with friend group. Eating lunch alone would be really tough. (Mao)

Many of the children tended to have lunch in the classroom, unless there was a student canteen available. Due to the existence of *Air* in the classroom, members of the class

may feel one needs to belong to certain lunch group and not to be alone. Again, there is a glimpse of significance in the density of the ‘*Air*’ among children especially in the class, and the importance of having, being with, and recognised to have friends in this setting in their lives. Notwithstanding, the collective *Air* collapses when they are out of the class, and this allows Mao to be alone when going home or to Juku.

The significance of *Bocci* can be seen in relation to *Ibasho*. In section 7.3 above regarding *Ibasho*, Mao stated that both the classroom and own room are her *Ibasho*. Many participants also referred places that personal relationships take place such as school but also to their own room where usually they could be alone. These two places are contradictory in their nature, but some participants shed light on why these could both be identified as *Ibasho* for them.

*I like to be with people, but at the end of the day I need to be alone.
Otherwise it gets tiring (Charice).*

*Unhappiness is about not having friends. Like, being Bocci. [...] [Ibasho]
is home (Lico).*

Here, relatedness and being alone seem to be interlinked, and it mirrors with Sumita’s (2003, p.12) study cited in Chapter 3 (see section 3.2-2). In his framework of *Ibasho*, he suggested that there are two ways the individual’s own room can be identified as *Ibasho*. One is that children consider it as the only *Ibasho*, and the other is that they consider it as one of multiple *Ibashos*. As many participants who talked about their own room also identified other relational spaces as their *Ibasho*, it can be suggested that this holds true and in most cases the children in this research considered their own room as one of multiple *Ibashos*. In this case, own room appears to be, even if they are alone, a space that entails relationship with other people emotionally if not face-to-face.

7.5-5 Education at School

The above sections established the uniqueness in relationships in association to the classes at school. Pedagogically, three major points emerged when children talked about their school lives: 1) school is a special place where people gather; 2) their school record of achievement is very important; and, 3) there are some negative aspects about school. The following section addresses these by covering the function of school and how children perceive it.

Some children referred to their school as a special place where people gather, and as above, stressed that relationships with friends is a significant part of school life, as Satoko stated.

[School] is a special place to be with friends. It's a place to play and not to study. (Satoko)

School is a 'special place' because it allows them to do more than just studying, such as meeting friends and engaging together in the collaborative tasks, as Shin described.

We made origami cranes together to make a thousand cranes. It was in junior high school time when we were going to the nuclear bomb museum in Hiroshima. We all made very possible effort to do it, and when we achieved it together, the sense of achievement was a lot! (Shin)

There is, thus, a strong sense of togetherness with peers in the school setting. In other words, there is an overturn of the school's function as a place to educate students with academic skills though it does seem to succeed in socialising children as harmonious social actors, but this causes a challenge in relation to the second point: the importance of the student's academic record.

Despite the above point on the overturn of school's academic function from their narratives, it appeared that many children cared a lot about their academic record and were not satisfied with it. For this reason, they felt a strong need to attend Juku to supplement their study, rather than to ask for extra support from schoolteachers. This seems to be a result of treating the class as a community in which children appear to be dissatisfied with collective teaching practice at school (see Chapter 2 section 2.1-4).

At that time all I wanted was to be able to follow the class, so [I was fine with Juku as far as I could follow the class]. (Haruka)

The pedagogical approach allows teachers to instruct mass numbers all at one go and foster a learning experience, but it might in turn create pressure for children to keep up with their peers. Furthermore, the academic standard score (T-score) is often regarded as important for entrance to high school and university (Cabinet Office, 2013). It does not actually affect children's entrance the higher education, but it supports them by showing where they are situated in the on-going competition amongst the same age group.

Not at all! Not [satisfied] at all about the record! At Juku I can do better, but school record is bad... Yeah about Juku record I am quite satisfied but the one at school...not satisfied. I want to improve it. (Nana)

Because I am in advanced class, my school record becomes low [in comparison to others in the class]. [Because I am in this class] it is low record. (Countrymaam)

In the primary school level, the standard score may appear insignificant, but their future does rest on it. To this extent, it can create the idea that they should not fall behind at any time and thus the school record becomes significant for them. Following Aoki's (2005b) study on the curriculum (see Chapter 2 section 2.1-4), the Japanese school curriculum appears to value a top-down system of 'curriculum-as-plan'. In this case, it is likely that individuality of each student is neglected in the class.

Finally, with respect to the negative aspects of school, some cited strict rules, the amount of homework, and being with teachers they do not like. As the participants are mainly those who at the time of the research were attending Juku, it is natural that they complained about the amount of homework they had to complete because they had a very limited amount of time after school and attending Juku. This was discussed under the issue of children having time constraints in Chapter 6. In terms of the teachers they reported not to like, this was a problem when such a teachers became the homeroom teacher. For example, Hanako commented that she does not like the homeroom teacher because he is troublesome, always making small comments on the class members' decisions, despite the fact that he does not keenly take part in their activities.

I can't wait [for the change of homeroom teacher]. I want to become the second (11th) grade very soon. (Hanako)

On the other hand, if the personality of the teacher matches that of the class, the resultant harmony can be beneficial. For instance, Yukari sees her homeroom teacher in a positive light because he introduced class ground rules and everyone respects them, which she felt was a constructive contribution.

The role of school teacher is important. It's about our homeroom teacher. Our homeroom teacher put up three ground rules to be kept on the wall. Like, don't hurt others, don't be lazy, and what else...I can't remember but something like that. Apparently he's been teaching these rules to the class he takes charge of. These rules are very effective. (Yukari)

Hence, the coordination of the class members including both students and teachers is very important when children consider their school lives.

7.5-6 School club

In the interviews, discourse around the school clubs was also frequently mentioned. As explored in Chapter 2 section 2.1-4, the centralised school curriculum states the benefits and requirements concerning students taking part in school clubs. Among the clubs provided by schools, the children have the freedom to choose which to join. Participating children often appeared to enjoy the clubs because they contained people with similar interests. For example, Haruka participated in the tennis club and said she enjoys it as her hobby.

[My] friends are those who are in same club. Even if it's summer holiday, we meet everyday, too, so we are very close. Yeah, I am close particularly with club members. [...] My hobby is the school club. (Haruka)

Furthermore, some children choose activities that initially they were doing outside of school, as in junior high schools the school clubs become more numerous and offer more choice. For instance, Countrymaam had been doing gymnastics as an OSA since an early age and continued it as a school club activity when she entered junior high.

I am in the gymnastics club [at school]. I'm the head. [For the OSA], I liked the gymnastics the most. [...] I remember I was looking for a [junior high] school where I can do the gymnastics. (Countrymaam)

Thus, it is clear that the school clubs function as a pedagogical tool to foster children's overall personality and skills, and they could often link to the children's interest in other OSAs. In relation to this point, the next section briefly looks into children's experience in the out-of-school activities.

7.6 Core life-space: Out-of-school activities

Many children continued to have and had had experiences in attending OSAs, which share some functions with the school clubs. For example, some children attended the OSAs for pursuing their interests and with the possibility of making good use of the activity in the future, such as gymnastics and piano lessons. Chapter 6 explored children's daily lives in relation to the after-school activities including the OSAs mainly with timeline and time use data. There, it was observed that some conflicts in agency between children and parents for starting the activity, and they increasingly become dissatisfied with the OSAs from the middle of primary school years. This section further adds a relational aspect that emerged from interviews in relation to OSAs on top of findings in Chapter 6. It appeared that OSAs provide children opportunities to make friends with similar interests. However, it depends on the form of the training such as whether it is one-to-one or group.

When I was leaving the swimming, those who were in the sixth (final) grade in the primary school were saying that they were quitting, too because they were all going to the junior high school. So I thought, oh well, it's fine [to quit]. So I quit. (Futaba)

I made friends at hula dance school! (Yukari)

Children feel easier to find a topic to talk about with fellow members, and thus become close to each other. However, at the same time, this could mean that their motivation to attend could deteriorate when their peers, particularly their friends, leave the OSAs for when the children grow up some may find their friends start leaving the activities. Being influenced by such friends, some children may similarly leave. This point indicates that close relationships with peers are a fundamental aspect of the OSAs. Despite children tending to have positive experiences at OSAs, they increasingly cease the attendance, as they grow older as Chapter 6 section 6.1-3 explored. Thus, it is clear that Juku becomes the more significant after-school activity than the OSAs. In relation to this shift, the next section looks at children's experience at Juku.

7.7 Core life-space: Juku

There are five main points associated with the core life space of Juku that became evident in chapter 6. For this reason, this section reviews and supplements the findings from previous chapter in relation to other empirical data that emerged in this chapter. These points are following:

1. Children have constraints on their time: they are in time poverty,
2. Children being able to express opinion or exercise agency matters with respect to their after-school activity experience,
3. Children increasingly come to see attending Juku as a normal activity and as a duty (Chapter 6 section 6.1-3),
4. Social relationships with teachers at Juku
5. Juku attendance is associated with the children's future lives.

This section first reviews these aspects in order to look into relational aspects in later sections. For the first point, Juku takes a noticeable share of children's after-school time, causing long-working hours for them. As became apparent in Chapter 6, the demands of studying which is associated with the notion of *Gambaru* lessens the time available to use as they like in their own lives. Secondly, knowing the purpose of, and being able to express

their own opinion regarding attending Juku could influence the children's Juku experience. In this respect, children's agency is a crucial matter in their Juku lives. Perhaps surprisingly, not many reported disliking the Juku they attended at the time of the interview. However, this may have been a result of them being able to change their Juku when they encountered issues. For example, if a child felt that the teacher did not suit her or that the teaching style was not beneficial, some explained that they had the choice to quit it and choose another, providing they had their parental consent.

I said that I didn't really like the Juku N, because all the teachers were strange, so what can I do? Then my mother said 'what about this place [current Juku]. '[...] It was difficult to understand, and the teachers were scary. Here, [teachers are] kind. (Satoko)

It may be the case that the Juku is treated as an investment in their children by some parents, thus the parents would want the investment to be fruitful and are keen to change the Juku in the hope that this would bring long-term academic benefits.

Thirdly, because it is such a normalised activity for them children may consider Juku as if it is part of school and many school friends attend it. In addition, the studies followed at Juku are related to school, and hence there is continuity between the school and Juku. As described in Chapter 6 section 6.1-2, so as not to fall behind in their school work children view supplementing schooling with Juku as essential and increasingly come to consider that it is their duty to attend Juku. However, Juku is perceived differently from school because it is a place to study and serves no other purposes. At school, children do not have a choice in determining affiliation to a class (Yanagi, 2005) but by contrast, they have more freedom of choice at Juku. Juku arrangements offer fluidity that can suit an individual's needs as was discussed regarding Rin's case where she changed Juku owing to her preferred teaching method (see Chapter 6 section 6.2). Moreover, not everyone is graded on their efforts unless they select to be in a competitive class for Juku. This competitiveness does not suit all and it is one of the common reasons for changing from studying in a class to attending on an individual basis. To this extent, children are free to choose whether they want to be in a competitive atmosphere or not.

I used to go to the class format Juku. [At this Juku], I had a bad experience, so I thought it is better to choose individual one. Like, we were put into ranking. (Minnie)

Some of the participants appeared to feel it was easier to ask questions at Juku rather than in school, as was seen in Hanako's case (see Chapter 6 section 6.2-2). Minnie's comment above

suggests that if a student is not fond of a certain thing, whether it is approachability of the teachers, the style of teaching, or if the attendance seems not to be worthwhile, then she could change the Juku arrangements. Ease in interaction with the Juku teachers that the children may gain through flexibility in terms of making choices appears to facilitate improved understanding. It may be that for this reason, some children appear to participate in Juku activities with more individualistic sense of self than at harmonious school, even if they were in a class at Juku.

From this last point, a fourth aspect emerges. That is, because children consider Juku as a place to study, they do not feel the need to make the effort to make and sustain friendships with peers. Instead, it appears that the teachers become more significant. This is remarkably different from the situation in schools where some participants reported that they prioritised relationships with friends and that the school teachers encouraged this through expecting students to engage in tasks collectively (see Chapter 6 sections 6.1-2 and 6.5).

Finally, while achieving a good school record remains very important for children, some appeared to place more value in their Juku education with regards to their present and future lives. As was explored in the section (see section 7.5 above) on school life, class teachers have a variety of responsibilities other than simply the education of children, and in some instances, the core objective of education seemed to be less prominent than it should have been for the children. Instead, some children appeared to perceive their Juku education as fruitful for themselves, which relates to the further point about children's sense of privilege in attending the Juku.

During the interviews, a few participants expressed the view that they felt themselves privileged to be able to attend Juku. Two points worth consideration arise in relation to this, first is the cost of the attendance, and the second relates to the need for extra help. As mentioned above, Juku is an investment and costs money because it is not a mandatory education service. Although some may consider Juku attendance to be a normal activity, they are also aware that their parents spend money on this extra study.

I am [lucky to attend the Juku]. There are people who cannot attend. It's not like my friends say they want to attend, but I think Juku is something expensive, so I think I am very fortunate. (Miho)

As Chapter 6 explored, value of Juku for supporting their understanding in their school subjects is acknowledged by some participants. Moreover, some were aware that there are

others who were not able to have this because of financial difficulties faced by the family. Thus, some expressed gratitude to their parents for deciding in favour of supporting them and/or allowing them to pursue their own path. The subsequent sections highlight the differences between Juku and school that children appear to perceive.

7.7-1 Differences in the nature of teachers (between Juku and school)

Chapter 6 and the above have highlighted that the form of studying at Juku differs from that of school in the perceptions of participants. To recapitulate, children appeared to perceive that school was not a place to study, while Juku is only for studying (see above section 7.5-1) despite the fact that both institutions aim to achieve the same objective, namely, educating students. In this way, school seem to be perceived as a place for learning which involves people's interaction to share and heighten the knowledge (Sato, 1999, p.27-8). In contrast studying that takes place at Juku seems to be more individualistic, and simply aims to compile knowledge. Thus, the forms of interaction between students and teachers appear to be different at Juku from school.

It was evident in the children's narratives that a Juku teacher's role differs from that of a school teacher because the former focuses a lot on specific skill development required for improved academic achievement. For example, in Chapter 6 section 6.1-2 Nana's perceptions about Juku teachers were covered. She explained that she attends Juku to prepare for the entrance examination for junior high school and considers that Juku teachers have a significant role not only in making her understand subjects more clearly but that that also they motivate her toward making academic improvement.

If I think about motivation for studying, it would be Juku teacher [who gives me motivation]. He gives us a little talk before the class starts, and then he emphasises the important point, and gives us motivation. Rather than parents, if it's about studying it would be Juku teacher. (Nana)

Hanako (see Chapter 6 section 6.2-2) also shared similar consideration as Nana. Moreover, Yukari stated the clear difference for her between Juku and schoolteachers.

The presence of [school class] teacher is important. [...] I think attending Juku is normal after all. Schoolteachers often tell us there is no need to go to Juku, but if I'm honest, the people who are making the study difficult to understand are teachers, right? They say not attending Juku and studying by ourselves is important. But in the end, even smart people go to Juku. (Yukari)

Yukari does respect her schoolteachers and considers them important but this is in terms of personal development rather than academic success. It may be reasonable to sum up the differences in perceptions as Juku teachers being regarded as conventional teachers but class teachers being more like life coaches for learners.

7.7-2 Differences in educational settings (between Juku and school)

From the above, it can be summarised that pedagogy differ between Juku and school. Firstly, as has been demonstrated from the discourses, many children are very anxious about maintaining their school record, and to supplement it in a beneficial way they attended Juku. Many have a strong sense of ‘having to catch up with’ or ‘keep up with’ their school peers. This may be a reason for why parents decide to make and/or let them attend the Juku for the children are seeking in Juku that which in their view they cannot get from school, namely, being taught effectively. Further points are that school functions in a collective format while Juku is more individually focused and this may contribute to some children feeling they can interact easily with Juku teachers who, in their opinion, seem to care about them more than the school teachers do. Due to these positive conditions, children feel Juku functions effectively to help with their overall academic development.

The schoolteacher is... well, at the Juku it's one-to-one. But the schoolteacher teaches to everyone, like class of thirty people, so it's difficult to listen to. In comparison, Juku teachers are easier to listen to and ask questions. (Haruka)

The Juku teacher is easier to interact with rather than school one. Well, because it's one-to-one. [School] is collective right? So it's difficult to ask questions... [School] class is fine but it should be more variable according to the levels. (Risako)

School functions with group so I need to keep up with them. Juku is with small number of people so yeah, something like that [is a difference between Juku and school]. (Yuki)

Why I like [Juku]? The teacher is kind. (Miho)

Thus, the need for attending Juku emerges from school studies, and its outputs are associated with beneficial returns in terms of schooling in present time, but, at the same time, its outputs enhance the future. In sum, Juku has an influence on the present and future, as was explored above in Chapter 6 section 6.3. Moreover, from the collected data about this particular core space, it has become apparent that children's expectations and experiences of Juku reflect on their school lives. Experiences at school and Juku cannot be detached from each other because they constitute an educational experience as a whole.

7.8 Relationship beyond the spaces

7.8-1 Form of interaction with significant others: conversation

The previous sections looked at children's lives particularly through relationship in each core life space. It must be acknowledged that the notion of relationships also matters across and beyond these identified core spaces. It is now clear that significant others such as family and friends are important for children. In the modes of relationships with the significant others, children particularly see a value in verbal interactions with them.

There are many means of interactions between children and their friends, such as playing and studying together, but talking to each other stood out the most for all participants as they claimed it brings joy to their lives.

[Family relationship is good because] we are close and we can talk about a lot of things to each other. (Mayu)

Hmm, if it's at school, I talk with my friends, and we become excited from it. (Yui)

We are close to each other. [With family and friends] I generally talk with them and watch TV together. (Risako)

The encouraging words given my friends and mother... yeah words by my parents give me confidence. (Shin)

The main activity for children in teenage years appeared to be talking rather than playing. In addition, according to different kinds of topics, the children talk to different others. Children talk about what has happened in school and about TV shows with their families.

[With my family] we watch TV together and doing that we laugh together. (Dee)

When it comes to conversations with friends, the topic is noticeably different and tends to touch on issues that they feel uncomfortable about sharing with their family members.

I think to Juku friends, I am saying more things. Yes, because the topics are different [from school friends]. [...] Well, how can I say, to school friends, I can talk about the future, but more generic...in relation to school. But to Juku friends, I can complain about school, can talk about the future, as well as personal life... something like that. (Mayuko)

[I talk to mother and friends] about same amount. But it depends on topic. I choose depending on that. When I don't like a certain thing about friend, then I talk to my mother first. (Misa)

Things I like to do are... I really like to study English. And well, I like to talk with my friends. [...] The reason why I like to friends is because I can be natural with them. I can share with them my worries. Then I feel

*refreshed and I become ready to Gambaru. We can be in friendly rivalry.
Also in order to enhance my character, the presence of friends is important.
(Mao)*

Despite Juku being considered as a place to study and not to make friends, if children do make friends there, it can be a positive friendship because it also offers an opportunity for people with similar interest in studying together. For instance, Mayuko attends at the Juku that specialises in supporting students to pursue a particular field of study in the university. Mayuko said she did spend most of her time with her school friends and felt safe enough to open herself to them. However, she preferred to keep private matters away from them, and she seemed to consider Juku offers another beneficial place for building relationships away from school that fulfils her needs. This difference between school and Juku friends could also be due to the variation in intensities of *Air* in these places. Nevertheless, generally speaking, most participants take similar position as Misa, which is to talk mainly to mothers and friends, and choose appropriate persons depending on the topic for discussion. Similar to the observations made regarding relationships at home (see section 7.4), the mother is the most significant figure for children out of all the family members. The mother rather than father also appeared to be a main person for children to negotiate with to make decisions. Despite their trust in the mother, children feel a clear difference in power in relation to their mothers.

7.8-2 Difference in interaction with adults in general

The preceding section showed that verbal interaction is a useful means to build a relationship with others, especially with friends of similar age as well as family members. However, it appeared that such strategy that is effective with some people does not necessarily function well with adults in general in the society. As was seen in the Chapter 3, children have traditionally been perceived as ‘not yet’ human-beings: they are always considered in comparison to adults. Overall, the participants reported opinions that are more negative than positive. Regarding the positive points, some were of the view that adults have a lot of experience and seem to have fun but, regarding the negatives, many commented on their frustration in relationships with adults, being of the opinion that most adults were unreasonable in their dealings with them.

About adults... I sometimes think they are cunning. For example, if I say something, or if a child says opinion, they don't hear it but if an adult says exactly same thing, they tend to listen to it. So there is a difference in levels

of importance. They once were children, too. [...] I don't think the way of using our mind would change that much. (Kilua)

If they say 'don't underestimate adults', I think 'but we are same human being, what are you saying?' (Satoko)

Aaah, sometimes I think 'why only adults?' It's like only adults have an advantage, and I think it's unfair. But again, there are good points about adults... (Yui)

Following offering their negative opinions about adults, some made suggestions about how adults should improve their attitude towards children: to listen to children, treat them equally and to be kind to them.

I want adults to listen to us. (Kilua)

Adults should be more understanding and try to list to us. [...] I want them to look at us with more equality with them. (Mari)

I understand that there is a chronological difference. But even so I want more equality with them [adults]. (Mayuko)

I think adults are selfish. There is a sense of 'children should listen to what adults say'. So it's not that I don't like them but I think 'why?' (Futaba)

I want adults to be friendlier. I want them to understand us. (Mayu)

I don't think adults care enough about how children feel. I want them to be more kind. (Pianist)

Furthermore, children talked about how society is led according to adults' opinions only and exclude those of children. Nana, for example, shared her frustration about adults ignoring children's opinions.

Adults...I think adults have an authority. There is no specific thing for which they have authority, but I think adults decide everything about the world. It's like because adults do things in this way, so children also have to follow it. [...] I think for them, it is important to listen to what children say. (Nana)

I wonder why only adults are allowed [to do certain things]. It's like only adults have priorities in doing things. (Yui)

Nana argued that there is no space for children to share their opinions and adults do not try to listen to them. Following this, the children seem to be unilaterally taken into an adults' world, which operates according to adults' rules, with their being no mutuality. In such a context, it is clear that some participants desired the opportunity to have more platforms to share their opinion.

7.9 Well-being

This chapter looked at children's lives particularly through the lens of their relationships. Chapter 6 showed that children have several phases where their uses and intentions of attending after-school activities vary, that they are in time poverty, and that they are under the pressure to make efforts. That is, after school activities highlighted the individual aspect of children's lives. The earlier sections gathered that children see a noticeable importance in their relationships with people, and their lives are situated in the dynamics of maintaining the harmony (*Air*) and therefore fearing to be left out of it (*Bocci*) especially in the school context. Thus, there are two ways to see children's experiences in everyday lives: the collective life at school and the individualistic life at after-school activities. For this reason, this section first explores how participant children perceive themselves in between these two different types of life. Following these findings, the latter part of the section considers about well-being as a summary of findings in the present study, particularly in relation to the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 4 (see section 4.4-3). This framework was built as a hypothesis from existing literatures that the subjective well-being of children would incorporate four major aspects: autonomy, security, self-value and material conditions. These aspects were situated in each living space, such as home, school, Juku and community with relationship with people as an overarching theme across time. This section simply explores what may contribute to children's happiness¹⁶ or subjective well-being, as the discussion chapter 8 carries out the further assessment of the framework.

7.9-1 Self and inner-affect

Exploring children's perception about themselves, it is evident that children's lives formulate around their relationship with other people. This aspect has a noticeable similarity to proposition about *Relational being* (Gergen, 2009) and *rhizomatic* approach (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). For this reason, this section returns the focus back to children as individuals, by first looking at children's agency in their relationships and then at their selves.

As was illustrated above children constantly have to undertake negotiations that are geared towards harmonised relationships. The first clear example of negotiation is that with

¹⁶ As was noted in the Chapter 5, this research employs 'happiness' synonymously to 'well-being'. 'Happiness' consists only a part of well-being, but for a lack of ideal translation between Japanese and English, it was unavoidable to choose this word.

adults, especially their parents. In decision making for themselves, most participants appeared to have a voice and are persistent about expressing it, and some do have a high degree of voice. At the same time, they are not entirely confident with their decisions and seek advice from their parents, and often, their parents have the final word. However, it should be noted that for primary school level children, there seems to be limited space for having a say (see Chapter 6 sections 6.1-2 and 6.1-3, and this chapter section 7.4) and it emerges that there is a chronological age difference regarding being able to exercise their agency through negotiations with parents across the childhood period. For instance, Chapter 6 observed that children increasingly exercised their decision-making especially in relation to out-of-school activities as they grew older.

Another example of children partaking in negotiation is with their friends, mostly in the school setting. Due to the high level of pressure to maintain collective harmony, children appeared to be ready to restrain their own opinion and actions when with friends. This refers to the issue of the power of *Air*.

At school, someone says 'I think this idea is good', then we are like 'that's right', because we are all easily carried away. So decisions are made in that way. (Misa)

If it [decision] is something I really do not like, then I would oppose to it, but if it's something I can bare, then I go along [with what my friends say]. (Rin)

If someone imposes a decision I don't think I can go against it. I would say 'ah, understood'. (Yuki)

Once the *Air* is set to a certain opinion, whoever is present is inclined to follow it. Furthermore, children attempt to fit their own views within the range of thinking that is acceptable to the crowd that has set the tone of the *Air*.

At school, there are occasions where we share opinions in the class right? I tend to choose what everyone seems to want to do and what I want to do. I never really say some opinion too off the scale, so I just agree with them. (Mao)

Hence, children seem to be concerned about fitting in and being viewed with the eyes of others, especially friends, but also battle with the desire to stay true to themselves.

The theoretical framework presented in the Chapter 4 (see section 4.4-3) includes 'self-evaluation' as one of the important parts that constitute children's subjective well-being, alongside with autonomy, security and material. In evaluating themselves, participants appeared to consider themselves negatively, such as being selfish and careless.

I do things really slowly. So I don't like myself being slow. It can be said also about studying. If someone tells me to do anything, I won't make move if it's something I don't want to do. I want to be more proactive. (Futaba)

If I may say, I am stubborn. But I tend to think about things negatively. (Hanako)

I do things unsatisfactorily. I study unsatisfactorily, I entered unsatisfactory level high school. Then I get unsatisfactory grade at school. (Mari)

I am careless in things. (Miyuu)

I'm unsatisfactory. I always make same mistakes. I always get scolded. (Rin)

Although self-evaluation should be healthy in order to foster well-being, many participants expressed negative thoughts about themselves. Such negative aspects tended to emerge in relation to their perceived inner-selves.

In the interviews, following the initial discussion about perceptions about selves, children were asked to indicate whether they liked themselves or not. While the perception of selves was inclined towards a negative one, the expressed fondness for themselves varied between like, dislike and somewhere in the middle. Among these options, it emerged that slightly more children disliked themselves when asked about this. For those who disliked themselves, the explanations given were similar to the negative perceptions of selves, such as being careless, always making the same mistakes, and giving up on things easily. Their negativity seems to be associated with the ability in completing given tasks in desired way and the inner-selves. These aspects regarding them liking themselves or not appeared to resonate with the notion of *Gambaru* and the significance accorded to putting in what is regarded as sufficient effort, regardless of the outcome.

In terms of the positive side of themselves, children are fond of themselves for their brightness and abilities in maintaining good relationships with people.

The part I like about myself is that I am bright. When talking with friends, if I were gloomy, then the conversation would not be fun thing. So by me being bright, we can make the conversation fun, I think me being bright is good thing. (Nana)

Think I am energetic! Also people I meet for the first time tell me that I am bright. (Shin)

Although some did proudly say that they liked themselves, some showed signs of hesitance in doing so. For example, Keiko struggles to express that she likes herself.

What can it be...What I like about myself, like about myself...What I like about myself....what is it? Aaaah difficult. This is difficult. (Keiko)

What I like about myself? Hmm, I would be narcissist if I say something like this... but I think I can make move concerning what others want from me. (Misa)

Misa similarly shared having a positive view of herself, but expressed the caveat that her statement is something that may give an impression that she is a conceited person. This may reflect the Japanese notion of there being an appropriate way for self-presentation, which should be done in a self-derogating or humble manner (*Kenson*) rather than a presumptuous way (Yoshida and Ura, 2003). Self-derogation is defined by Yoshida and Ura (2003, p.121) as ‘actively presenting self negatively to others, and avoiding presenting the self positively to others’. The level of self-derogation adopted varies but it betters the perception of a person by others when this stance is used for, by so doing, an individual can present oneself as kind, thoughtful and not conceited. Notwithstanding this social convention, many participants considered themselves as generally fine and did not fully like or dislike themselves, but rather preferred to take a position in the middle ground.

Because children are highly concerned about maintaining harmony in relationships, how they think other people around are perceiving them is crucial. In contrast to some participants’ own perception of self, the children tended to point out that others think about them positively, because others tell them in this manner. For instance, friends tell them that they are kind, smart, outgoing and sociable.

Friends tell me I am honest. Well, and I am bright. And I am sociable. (Mao)

Others like friends from primary school told me I am fun. Like when we talk. Even now as a senior high school student, when I meet those friends, they tell me I haven’t changed. So I think I am talkative. (Neko)

The positive aspects pointed out by the other people are, for this reason, highly related to their social skills. Such positive comments are often received well by children, but some are overwhelmed by it when they feel this is an overstatement and struggle to accept it. For example, Mayu and Miyuu had difficulty in believing other people’s positive comments about them.

At school they say a lot that I’m reliable. But I don’t really think so that much. (Mayu)

I am always told ‘you are energetic!’ But I wonder if it’s true. (Miyuu)

Others tell me I am kind. But really? (Yuki)

Furthermore, if children were never told by anyone else about others' perceptions of them, they tended to imagine that this must be negative. For instance, the imagined negative perception of self by others is related to the points that feature in their own self evaluations.

I imagine others think I am tiresome. (Hanako)

Hmm I wonder [it can be bad] because my use of language can be bad sometimes. (Yui)

It appears that the negative perception of self persists as a powerful force even when contradicted by positive comments offered by others.

This section looked at how 'self' is perceived both from inside and outside a child. Along with above findings, other people have a role to provide children's inner-affect such as motivation, a sense of achievement and confidence as was seen in the above section on friends.

Being able to do what I like after completing task [gives me motivation]. (Rin)

When my friends become happy from the manga that I drew and they say 'you are amazing!' then I feel yes! I achieved it! (Midori)

When I manage to do something well [I get confidence]. (Yuki)

If they do not rely on an external source of motivation, some children reported gaining it by setting an aim and a reward for completion of a task, which then drives them to make effort to achieve it. The reward does not necessarily have to be an object, but a simple word from other people. The positive feelings such as motivation, sense of achievement, and confidence thus arise from a combination of the children's own inputs and their receiving appreciation and recognition from others.

7.9-2 Happiness

As noted at the beginning of this section, the theoretical framework in Chapter 4 section 4.4-3 hypothesised that fulfilment of major aspects in time, space and relationship would contribute to children's subjective well-being. The discussion chapter 8 assesses of theoretical framework, and this section instead presents the overview of what may contribute to children's happiness.

Before moving onto exploring children's happiness, it must be noted that the material aspect that was hypothesised in the theoretical framework appeared to be of minor importance in the children's discourse. Among the participants, only Neko had a concern

regarding family finances, probably because her family comprises a single mother and four siblings.

I want the money to pay tuition fees for university. I am so lucky to be able to attend the Juku where I met such amazing people. I could experience various things at Juku. Really, my mother raises four of us and being in a situation that I should make effort to study myself, my mother works so hard to let me attend Juku. I am just so thankful. If I win lottery I would pay for tuition fee, let my mother go on a trip, and then return all what she did to me with those money. (Neko)

Aside from Neko, all the other participants' families seem to be financially stable, if not wealthy. Children did have a desire to have more of their favourite things, such as clothes, cute stationary and books, but they were satisfied with their living standards. Aside from material aspect, it appeared that other dimensions included in the framework are essential.

Returning to the consideration of sense of happiness, first, children shared their understanding of 'happiness' and 'unhappiness'. In terms of 'happiness', some children generally considered that being able to have a normal life leads to their happiness.

Being able to live a standard life. Just like now. It is the happiness. (Futaba)

As far as we live normally, it's happiness and also if we are smiling, that's happiness. (Mayuko)

[Happiness are] eating meals. Taking bath. Being able to play the piano. Being able to study. There is no war. (Pianist)

Nothing but living normal life [is happiness]. (Yuki)

What constitutes 'normal life' is ambiguous, but examples can be eating food, having a good relationship, and being able to attend school. These examples can effectively be understood in relation to family affluence, personal relationships, and life opportunities respectively, which echo the dimensions proposed in the theoretical framework. Nevertheless, the salience of each varies between children.

Apart from a normal life, children also consider that to laugh, to have fun and to have good relationships make them feel happiness.

If everything is fun, everything is happiness. (Miyuu)

To laugh. To be able to laugh is happiness (Nana)

Happiness is when I am eating meals, and also when I have fun conversation with friends. (Shin)

What makes some children laugh or feel fun is not specified, but these appear to be the indicators of their happiness. Above all, it is evident that relationship acts as a fundamental factor for feeling happiness. From these it would be easy to assume what unhappiness might mean, but it transpired that children do not consider unhappiness as fully opposite to happiness, although relative to each other. Most commonly, children associated unhappiness with not having any family and friends, being lonely and having bad relationships.

When there someone close to you is gone would be unhappiness. (Misa)

When someone around you is bullied or there are a lot of arguments [would be unhappiness]. (Ran)

As the sample of girls interviewed for this research was very specific with most of them being economically stable, any financial or material trouble may not have been noted as a cause of unhappiness. Nevertheless, the importance attributed to personal relationships was very significant. Furthermore, this aspect is even more prominent when they consider what may enable people's happiness in general. Some children said that the vital elements for having such happiness are good relationships and having trust with other people.

To have someone you can trust [would bring happiness to everyone]. (Charice)

I think it is difficult for everyone to be happy altogether, but I think listening to each other is important. (Hanako)

Being able to be polite to other people [can make everyone happy]. (Yukari)

Taking all the above points into consideration, it is evident that relationships form the major part of children's conception of happiness and unhappiness. Last but not least, from their observations the older children were more likely than the younger ones to regard unhappiness as something necessary in life to recognise happiness.

Because there are small happinesses, we can understand when these happinesses happen [what unhappiness is]. (Hanako, 16 years old)

Unhappiness is something what we need. I hope it comes with balance [in relation to happiness] (Haruka, 15 years old)

Thus, happiness and unhappiness seem to have interlinking function to each other.

Finally, children were asked to rate their life satisfaction in present time between one (least satisfied) and ten (most satisfied). This was done to see how children rate their lives and what meanings they attach to it. Overall, participants in average rated their satisfaction as 7.7. Though the reason behind is uncertain, children in private school appeared to rate

their lives better¹⁷ than those in public schools, where former rated 8.5 and the latter 6.9. Apart from this difference, children's reasoning for the rate varied noticeably.

I haven't managed to do what I want to do, and also because I still have to take the entrance examination for the university. That's why I put 8. (Countrymaam, rated 8)

[Subtracting] 3 is because of the hope for having more fun later. But I am satisfied. (Misa, rated 7)

It's somewhere in the middle. It's neither I'm so happy nor I'm so unhappy. I'm in the middle but if I have to choose, I am geared toward being happy. (Midori, rated 6)

I feel like there is still something I may be able to achieve. Well, I may be hoping too much but yeah. (Hanako, rated 8)

I'm not doing well in my school club and also I am not done with summer holiday homework... (Shin, rated 5)

As Countrymaam said, the choice of the score eight was in relation to her future oriented consideration. Misa put the score at seven because she wanted a space to fill with fun experiences that await her in future. In terms of Shin, she was concerned with her present life, in relation to school club and the amount of homework she was facing. Their quotes suggest that even though they were asked to rate the satisfaction of present lives, children also consider about the hope and desire to fulfil in the coming future. Furthermore, even for those who decided on rates according to their present day level of satisfaction, the approach varied between children. For example, Miho rated her life satisfaction as five, stating that she felt there are half good things and half bad things in her life. Nana, on the other hand, rated the satisfaction as nine, and stated nothing could ever be completely satisfying but she is as satisfied as she can be. From these, it appears essential to recognise the variety in children's reasoning in evaluating their lives with a scale.

7.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the experiences of children in each life space such as home, school and after-school activities through the lens of relationships. Here, community was not included as one of the life spaces, because of the result of the eco-map drawings with children: children appear absent from the neighbourhood community. To gain an overview

¹⁷ The average rate was calculated from each demographic groups: public school-younger children, public school-older children, private school-younger children and private school-older children as were categories in Chapter 6 section 6.2.

of children's experiences, their perception of space was first explored. In relation to space, children appeared to seek relaxation and a space to be oneself, due to the time poverty and the pressure to present themselves in the manner expected by others. *Ibasho* is a significant notion in the lives of children in Japan. Though its definition is unclear, it is evident that *Ibasho* consists of the mutual relationship between other people and self.

As eco-maps indicated, home, school and afterschool activities appeared to be core life spaces in children's lives. Home functions as a place to interact with family members. Children see family as the most important people to have relationships with, though they have little time to spend time with, and home acts as a place to relax and to be themselves. School appeared to be the main life space where children have relationships especially with friends, and it is a very important aspect of their lives. It consists of multiple kinds of relationships with people and groups such as friends, classes, clubs and teachers. The class functions in particular way in the Japanese school system, operating as a community to foster not only academic but also human skills of children. For this reason, the class makes the *Air* between children very dense, and they may find it very difficult to express themselves. The pressure of trying to fit in to the crowd can also be understood by their fear of becoming *Bocci*. In such a context, making and keeping friendship in collective mass becomes priority for them; however, the school record remains important for children, and they seek extra support outside school.

Following the situation in school, the other core life space that is significant for children in this research is Juku. Juku experience entails several themes, such as time poverty and a sense of duty, which Chapter 6 explored. From these features, it became evident that Juku and school are providing different childhood experiences. In addition to the relationship in each space, children value it beyond the spaces with the significant others, such as family and friends, with whom children enjoy conversation. Children's frustration in the manner of interaction with adults was also explored, and it became clear that children are not content with how they are treated by them: children desire to have their voice heard.

Last but not least, children's perception and level of well-being were considered as a summary of findings in the present study. The participants in the research tend to see themselves negatively, but they are able to gain positive affects and happiness through relationships with people. From the findings both in preceding and the present chapters, it is evident that relationship and multiplicity matter for children's lives even when time aspect

is considered. There appear to be a resemblance with Gergen's (2009) theory on 'Relational Being' and Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) '*Rhizome*' theory (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-4 and Chapter 5 section 5.3-1), and they seem to be appropriate to consider about children's well-being. Thus, the next chapter will advance the consideration about children's Juku experience and its relation to well-being especially in relation to above two concepts.

Chapter 8 Discussion

8.0 Introduction

This thesis sought to explore urban Japanese children's, especially girls', perceptions of well-being in relation to their Juku attendance. This is because children's experiences in Juku are seldom studied, and their well-being tends to be investigated in the school and home contexts only. Accordingly, there was a gap in knowledge as to why children continued attending Juku, how they experienced it, and how it might influence their perception of their well-being. To achieve filling this gap, the main research question was set as "how do children perceive Juku attendance in relation to their life and well-being in urban Japan?" Furthermore, sub-questions were addressed in relation to time, variation in childhood, agency and role of Juku in education. The preceding chapters 6 and 7 identified that school, Juku, time and relationships (*Ibasho*) have significance in children's lives, as well as the utility of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) *rhizome* approach. This chapter begins in section 8.1 by suggesting the usefulness of *rhizome* theory, with which children are considered as assemblages. Then, section 8.2 comprises a discussion of how child well-being can be understood through these findings and in relation to the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 4 section 4.4-3 and suggests some implications of this study.

As it was noted at the beginning of Chapter 3, this thesis first explored a range of concepts and theories on childhood, well-being and child well-being. However, it became evident from the empirical analysis that another approach was required to understand these matters of interest. Thus, in this chapter I will elaborate upon further conceptual developments based on the empirical analysis.

8.1 Understanding children's lives and well-being from a rhizomatic perspective

Deleuze and Guattari's *rhizomatic* approach appeared to be of value in considering children's life experiences drawn from the findings that explored their daily after-school activities. Here, we will consider childhood with a *rhizomatic* approach by focusing on present time. Present time is a focus because of the findings on children's perception of *Ibasho* and the obscure notion of future, which echo Deleuze's (1968) concept of time (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1). Changes in the molecular level also transform that of the molar, and influence the interpretation of the past and direction toward the future. The following section will first assess the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 4 and discuss the

application of a *rhizomatic* approach to understand child well-being.

8.2 Contribution to understanding child well-being with a rhizomatic approach

The preceding empirical chapter illustrated that, in terms of well-being, participant children generally tended to see themselves negatively. Nevertheless, there is variation in the ways in which children evaluate their lives. Despite focusing on ‘well-being’ as a topic in interviews, the aspects each child brought into consideration differed. Among these, relationships with significant others emerged as the most important for children, and the state of those relationships can influence their well-being.

These points seem to conform to understandings of child well-being suggested by Fattore et al. (2009) and Watson et al.(2012) and others. Before moving on to discuss the significance of these two studies in this research, I will assess the theoretical framework set out in Chapter 4 section 4.4-3 (agency, security, materiality and self-value), which was developed based on studies by Richard and Ryan (2002), White (2009a) and Fattore et al. (2009). Subsequently, I will discuss the contribution of this study by mirroring it with Fattore and Watson’s works.

Assessment of theoretical framework

The framework set out in Chapter 4 included agency, security, materiality and self-value as dimensions constituting children’s subjective well-being (SWB). In addition to these dimensions, I proposed that time and space are also important aspects to consider, with emotional life and relationships as overarching themes. As earlier sections looked into time and space thoroughly, this section will assess these dimensions individually.

Firstly, in terms of agency, time-related findings in Chapter 6 indicated that children appear to be content with the level of agency they have. Clearly, there are times when they have difficulty exercising their agency to the fullest extent. However, they are also aware that there are different levels of power attached to agency that they can exercise according to the varying stages of childhood. For instance, when children are younger, they feel obliged to attend Juku because they have a bad school record and parents suggest that they need to supplement their studies. In this way, older children increasingly feel that they should, with their own agency, attend Juku. The result coincides most with Fattore et al.’s (2009) understanding of children’s agency: children find contentment when they can have a say and negotiate with adults. To this extent, children understand their agency from the relational

perspective in time.

Second, security was included in the framework due to the continuous concern over bullying and truancy (MEXT, 2011), as well as dangers in the public space in Japan (Cabinet Office, 2014c), to explore whether they are common and if they affect children's lives. In this respect, the understanding and application of 'security' appeared as similar to that of Fattore et al.. Bullying was not apparent in children's discourses because it was a past experience for them at the time of interview. A few participants stated that they have been bullied, but stressed that it was already resolved and that it was insignificant. If not a victim, several participants were aware that bullying happened, especially at younger ages. Rather than bullying, children were more concerned about their relational security (*Ibasho*), in other words, their subjective belonging to the mass. Other than bullying and *Ibasho*, children were concerned about travel to and from school and Juku. They all tried to prevent trouble with various strategies, such as having their parents come to pick them up. For travel to and from school, there are some schemes to protect children (Cabinet Office, 2014c). However, there is no standardised rule to protect children travelling to and from Juku. This issue is also raised by Dierkes (2011) (Chapter 2 section 2.3-5), suggesting a lack of concern about health and safety in relation to Juku attendance. In this respect, numerous features should be considered for the 'security' of children in Japan, both subjectively and objectively.

Third, material aspects were not evident in children's discourses, though it is often one of the main concerns in considerations of well-being (UNICEF, 2007, 2013b; OECD, 2009; Bradshaw, 2007) (see Chapter 4 section 4.2). This absence of material aspects may be because the study focused on 'girls who attend or has an experience of attending Juku'. Juku is a consumer good, and for this reason, it is often blamed for increasing educational inequality as a consequence of meritocracy (Mimizuka, 2007a). It can be assumed that the participants are fairly wealthy in relation to the overall child population in Japan. However, it does not mean that material goods are insignificant in their lives. Instead, these children simply appear to be fulfilled enough in their material needs that it did not appear in their discourse. One of the participants was from a lone parent family, and she felt fortunate to be able to attend Juku despite her family's financial difficulties, and was wishing to finish Juku as soon as possible to reduce the financial burden on her mother. In addition to financial considerations, it can be considered appropriate to include children's time poverty within the material dimension. It is certainly not something that affects their wealth (rather, it is affected

by it), but it does influence their lifestyles.

Finally, self-value for children is affected significantly by relationships; for example, significant others complimenting the child. In this sense, there is a resemblance to all three foundational theories (Self-Determination Theory [SDT], three-dimensional framework [3D] and the Model of children's well-being). As was noted at the beginning of this section, the findings illustrate that there is a tendency for children to view themselves a little negatively, and this is often associated with their ability to complete given tasks in an expected manner, as well as their inner-selves (see Chapter 7 section 7.9-1). This aspect is influenced by the notion of *Gambaru* and humbleness (*Kenson*) (see Chapters 6 and 7). Both these concepts, in fact, accompany the relational aspect. In terms of *Gambaru*, presenting *to others* how much effort they are putting is key. In this way, a child constantly tries to present herself to be meeting a collectively agreed standard. Similarly, humbleness means 'actively presenting oneself negatively *to others* (emphasis added by the author)(Yoshida and Ura, 2003, p.121), and is considered as a valuable act in Japanese society. Possibly because of these concepts, children do not actively see or show themselves positively; however, if others praise them, they happily accept it. Thus, it can be considered that positive affection from other people they have relationships with are the foundation of their self-value. To this extent, I suggest that Japanese children's notion of 'self-value' may be different from other cultures.

In addition to the above, it was clear that the state of relationships mattered considerably for children's subjective well-being (SWB¹⁸). The methodology clarified that 'well-being' as a word does not exist in Japan, and for this reason, 'happiness' was employed in this research. As 'happiness' had to be employed instead of SWB, participant children's discourses already reflected their emotions. To this extent, the study partially, if not fully, agrees with Fattore et al.'s conclusion about well-being: it is about emotional lives (Fattore, 2009). In the three-dimensional framework, White (2009a) suggested that SWB was coupled with each objective dimension: material, social and human. In this case, this research cannot fully agree with White's conclusions, as there were no objective dimensions that stood out to be significant in children's discourse. However, White's later work with her colleagues (2014) on Inner Well-being (IWB) reflects the findings in this research better. To recapitulate, IWB considers about 'what people think and feel they are able to be and do'

¹⁸ SWB is defined as 'an individual's cognitive evaluation of life, the presence of positive emotions, and the lack of negative emotions' (Diener, 1994).

(White *et al.*, 2014, p.723). The dimensions of IWB do not put too much weight on objective well-being, and include ‘social connections’ and ‘close / family relationships’, which White *et al.* stress are important to a person’s IWB. Additionally, in this study, children’s discourse about happiness seems to agree considerably with self-determination theory (SDT¹⁹). The findings indicate that the relational process realises children’s positive perceptions of self and agency. They also highlighted that the praise and compliments from other people contribute to positive feelings, and these aspects resemble SDT’s consideration of ‘relatedness’. Thus, SDT seems to explain children’s sense of SWB well in the context of this research. Nevertheless, the aspects that contribute to children’s life satisfaction vary considerably between individuals. Hence, SDT may explain children’s well-being sufficiently if not perfectly, but we also need to be aware that there is no single answer about what contributes to it, aside from relationships.

This section assessed the findings in relation to the framework developed in Chapter 4. In developing the framework, it was originally expected that particular dimensions would constitute child well-being in association to Juku attendance in Japan. The analysis instead revealed that the dimensions that were hypothesised as important are unclear in children’s perspectives. Rather, the relational aspect seems to have a fundamental significance to children’s thinking. In relation to these points, the next section will discuss the contribution of this research in line with Fattore (2009), Watson (2012) and others’ works.

Discussion for further understanding of child well-being and research contribution

Conducting this study, it appeared difficult to identify *the* aspects or *the* dimensions of well-being in this study. This may be due to the sample of participants used in this research, who tend to be reasonably wealthy and able to attend Juku. In this respect, the objective aspect of well-being often discussed by economists and international organisations may be insignificant for these particular children. Thus far, I clarified that relationships play a key role in Japanese children’s well-being. Returning to what this thesis sought to explore, Juku does not seem to influence their well-being. This is because children essentially consider Juku as necessary for their education, although time poverty remains as a negative consequence. Here I use the metaphor of ‘symphony’ to consider the significance of

¹⁹ SDT comprises of three components: competence, autonomy and relatedness. Ryan and Deci (2002) suggest that fulfilling these components leads to well-being. (Chapter 4.1-2)

relationships in child well-being. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in fact refer to music as similar to *rhizome*. A music score is written with individual notes. But when one plays the music (*rhizome*), notes form ‘lines of flight’²⁰ (melodies). In this sense, a note can be seen as representing an individual person (*molecule*), forming *molar* assemblage (music), and a missing note can result in a different melody (well-being) overall.

Reflecting on Fattore et al. (2009) and Watson et al.’s (2012) works, I argue that the Western model of well-being that is dominant in international discourse does not necessarily capture different cultural contexts. To this point, I suggest that cultural understanding is fundamental to the consideration of well-being. Applying the metaphor of a symphony, the Western well-being model can be seen as ‘classicism’ (conventional), while an attempt to understand cultural contexts can be seen as a new development, similar to the rise of ‘romanticism’ in the history of the symphony.

To recapitulate, both Fattore (2009) and Watson’s (2012) studies argued that children’s lived relational experience is a fundamental constituent of their well-being. Fattore and his colleagues (2009) suggested that children made sense of things and their own well-being through their relationships and emotional life. In this respect, children’s worlds and cultures appeared to be different from those of adults. Hence, they criticised adult-led approaches for seeing well-being as multifaceted rather than valuing children’s perspectives, which highlight their emotional and relational lives. Fattore’s study also suggested that children considered well-being as ‘something to be negotiated’ through a process, as well as to be achieved as an outcome (see Chapter 5).

Watson et al. (2012) focused on social and emotional well-being (SEWB) in a school context by listening to minority voices to explore three propositions. They propose that SEWB is ‘subjectively experienced, contextual and embedded, and relational’ (*ibid.*, p.7-8,p.222-223). Following this exploration, they concluded that child well-being is a phenomenological body, which is constituted of their intersubjective and inter-relational experiences in daily encounters. This application of the idea of phenomenological body is similar to Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) thinking about micro-systems in the ecology model, in

²⁰ ‘Lines of flight’ is an essential concept in Deleuze and Guattari’s work. In their writing, it is illustrated as follows: ‘The line of flight marks: the reality of a finite number of dimensions that the multiplicity effectively fills; the impossibility of a supplementary dimension, unless the multiplicity is transformed by the line of flight; the possibility and necessity of flattering all of the multiplicities on a single plane of consistency or exteriority, regardless of their number of dimensions’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).

contrast to meso- (social body) and macro- (body politic) systems (see Chapter 4 section 4.2-1). In this manner, children's worlds and cultures do not exist detached from those of adults, but in relation to them.

As the findings showed, the significance of relationships in children's lives and well-being can be considered in relation to *Ibasho*. From the preceding sections, there appears to be the need to recognise individuals in the pedagogical context, such as in class and life experience (in *Ibasho*) for child well-being in Japan. This need in turn means avoiding the 'absence of *Ibasho* (self)', which essentially is social death (Guenther, 2013). Since relationships that value collective harmony (*Air*) are of great importance in Japan, there is a greater risk that Japanese children will sense the absence of their own *Ibasho* in comparison to those from more individualistic cultures.

Fattore and Watson's studies recognise children's worlds, and are helpful in understanding child well-being from children's perspectives. Children's worlds function and are experienced differently from adults' worlds. However, despite focusing on relationships, Fattore and Watson do not address a high likelihood of children sensing 'absence of *Ibasho* (social death)'. It is probably because in their fields of research, Australia and England, individuality is more valued than collectivism (Gross, 2015). The significance of *Ibasho* and its function in confirming and realising one's self-existence for Japanese children's well-being goes beyond Fattore and Watson's relational and phenomenological understanding. To this extent, I argue that Western understandings of childhood and child well-being are not well suited to exploring these concepts in a Japanese context. This study thus contributes by adding a Japanese cultural context from children's perspectives about their life-world to well-being discussions, stressing the importance of the cultural understanding. This point is also supported by White et al.'s (2014) work in the global south. The idea of the 'global south' is dichotomous in relation to 'industrialised' countries. In this case, Japan may be included in the latter group of countries. However, though the nature of economic activity is same or similar to that of the Western countries, cultural norms are vastly different in Japan. This aspect can be discussed also in relation to the OECD. The OECD was formerly known to people as 'the rich country club', and Japan is one of the countries added in the early stage of its history²¹ (21st of 34 member countries). Looking at the list of member countries²², there

²¹ The OECD was established in 1961 with twenty founding member countries (OECD, anon).

²² These are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark,

is, without question, cultural diversity. To this extent, there also is a need for the recognition and understanding of cultural contexts, and Japan is not an exception. This need to recognise diversity resembles the situation of Japanese school pedagogy that has emerged in this study: that the molar undermines the molecular.

Concerning the above points, I propose that more diverse approaches in understanding well-being in relation to cultural contexts are important, and in the case of Japan, *Ibasho* seems to be the key. In order to support Japanese children in maintaining their sense of self-existence (*Ibasho*), there should be someone who can recognise, accept and respect their individual differences so that they feel they can be, and are, part of the molar. Nevertheless, as Watson et al. suggested, the meaning, understanding and function of well-being seem to be different between the molecular and molar levels. With these considerations in mind, the next section will suggest the implications of this research.

Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States (alphabetical order) (*ibid.*)

Chapter 9 Conclusion

This chapter first briefly summarises the key findings of this research in relation to *Ibasho*, education and relationality in section 9.1, which will be discussed further in section 1). Following the discussion, I propose policy recommendations for child well-being, both in Japanese and international contexts in section 9.3. Finally, this chapter will end by addressing the limitations of this research and suggesting a future research direction in section 9.4, with closing remarks in section 9.5.

9.1 Key findings from this study

This study started off by looking at the role of Juku in children's lives in order to explore the following research questions.

How do children perceive Juku attendance in relation to their life and well-being in urban Japan?

1. What are the key factors contributing to children's relational well-being in Japan?
2. How does Juku attendance influence children's well-being in Japan and how does this differ over time?

The findings then fall into three key elements.

1) *Ibasho* and other relational spaces are significant factors contributing to children's relational lives and well-being in Japan.

This research has established that children and young people's lives are exceptionally relational in Japan. Particularly, *Ibasho* has a significant role and children achieve it through relationships. At the same time, children realise their self-existence through *Ibasho*: children's selves and relationality are reciprocal. Thus, if a child's sense of *Ibasho* is compromised, she may feel that her self-existence is overlooked, which is similar to the state of 'social death'. *Ibasho* therefore refers not only to physical but also to emotional and relational spaces. Although *Ibasho* is significant, its extent and function vary depending on life-spaces, such as home, school and Juku. *Ibasho* at school has considerable significance for children, and influences *Ibasho* in other life-spaces. Such contrasts occur due to other relational features such as *Air*, and *Bocci* which permeate the school environment.

At school, children are put in a class, which acts as a harmonious community for at least a year. They are required to spend most of their school time with a set of people in the class: they are placed in *forced relationality*. In such relationality, children are constantly pressured

to ‘read the *Air*’ and seeking consensus depending on the situation and the classmates. In such a fixed, pressurised and collective environment, children expressed a fear of being *Bocci*. This means that a child does not want other people to register her as alone or incapable of making friends. Thus, reading the *Air* can be a strategy to avoid being *Bocci* and to establish one’s relational self, which is *Ibasho*. The relational spaces explored here are almost spiritual, and are distinctive in Japan. Hence, the finding indicates that an application of a conventional approach to child well-being, which is developed in Western culture does not capture the particular social demands and expectations that are generated in the Japanese context.

2) Juku positively influences children’s relational needs with individual recognition and supports their future well-being, but at the cost of their own time in the present.

Influence of Juku on well-being

In contrast to a child being placed in *forced relationality* at school, Juku recognises each child as an individual, and this seems to have a positive influence on their well-being. Even so, this does not mean that relationality, for example *Ibasho*, does not matter at Juku. In fact, it does matter, but Juku offers a different type of relationality: *flexible relationality*. Rather than being submerged in the mass as children tend to be at school, they appear to value individual relationships with teachers and/or friends at Juku. Juku offers flexibility in choosing what kind of relationship they want and with whom. Nevertheless, it must be noted that there is a higher Juku attendance rate in urban areas than in rural areas. For instance, there are more educational options and as a result a higher competitiveness in urban areas than in the rural areas (Mimizuka, 2007b). This means that there is a considerable pressure for children in urban areas to attend Juku. Thus, the finding here reflects only children’s experiences in urban Japan and the extent of Juku experiences may vary across the country.

Influence of Juku on children’s time and agency

There are three features Juku entails regarding time and agency. Firstly, children’s motives for Juku attendance vary across childhood. Secondly, there is a shift in children’s agency in relation to their Juku attendance. Thirdly, children attend Juku for their future at the cost of the present time.

In the first instance, the findings showed that there was a difference in motives for Juku attendance, particularly between younger and older children. For instance, younger children in this research who were aged 10 to 14 attended Juku to supplement their school studies.

However, as they grow older to ages between 15 and 18, they consider Juku attendance beneficial for their future success. As such, Juku has multifaceted functions and children can make use of these functions for different needs over time. The second instance is related to a shift in children's levels of agency. When children are little, often parents make decisions on their Juku attendance, despite some children being unhappy about Juku attendance at this age. However, when children grow older, they gain agency and increasingly feel the need to attend Juku for their future. While children express discontent about adults often not listening to their voices, they are also aware that they are not yet fully capable of making appropriate decisions. For this reason, children stressed that it is important for them to feel that their opinions are being considered even if they are not accepted. Finally, children attend Juku for success in the near or further future at the cost of their private time in the present. Children attend Juku to supplement school study or to prepare for entrance examinations. However, Juku mostly operates in after-school hours, and extends children's daily schedule. Though it may be beneficial, longer daily schedules can make children tired and stressed, and ending class late at night entails its own dangers on making the way home from Juku.

9.2 Discussion of the findings

The data analysis clarified that children's selves and lives are constituted of different aspects and in relation to many other people, and the need for recognition of a variation in childhood experience. Accordingly, the previous chapter implied the practicality of using *rhizomes (assemblages)* to see children as individuals, and their daily lives in the context of their wider relationships (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Various fields of study have applied the works of Deleuze and Guattari, such as the sociology of childhood; education; and feminism (Goodley, 2007; Lee, 2001; Prout, 2005) (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-4). To recapitulate, the *rhizome* approach sees the world as a form of tuber, and considers it as constituted of connections between *rhizomes*. The small-scale, or otherwise *molecular rhizomes* make the large (*molar*) ones, while at the same time *molars* make the *moleculars*.

[...] There are only multiplicities of multiplicities forming a single assemblage, operating in the same assemblage: packs in masses and masses in packs (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.34).

In this way, children as molecular assemblages in diverse relationships with family, friends and so forth, and in (*molar*) settings such as home, school, Juku and OSA, have various daily experiences and perceptions about well-being. By focusing on children's everyday lives,

findings revealed that there is a tension between school and Juku; one emphasising collective harmony and the other focusing on individual academic understanding. Accordingly, the following sections first look at school, then Juku, followed by the issues of time and relationships in children's lives with the application of a *rhizomatic* approach.

9.2-1 Children's experiences at school

It became apparent in the preceding chapter that children view school as a place to meet friends rather than to study. It appeared that this is due to the school's pedagogical approach in achieving harmonious collectiveness, where students take roles as members of the class community. Treating the class²³ as a community establishes various goals, and eventually positions studying as a secondary priority. Furthermore, children fear to be seen as alone (*Bocci*), because of the collective and harmonious value. This harmonious value (*Air*) is maintained by people that are present by sharing common ideas. In connection with the *Bocci* and *Air*, there is another Japanese concept well embedded among not only children but also adults: *Ibasho*. Since *Ibasho* illustrates the significance of relationships to children, it will be discussed further later in this section.

In Chapter 5, it was established that this study takes a constructionist ontological standing based on Gergen's (2009) 'Relational Being'. This approach seemed useful for considering children's lives, but it appeared that his theoretical approach did not address the Japanese pedagogical context. 'Relational Being' poses a strong value in collective coordination by moving away from Western individualism. Education has conventionally been seen in the West as a tool to socialise children to become autonomous and bounded agents. By applying this concept to pedagogical practice, Gergen suggests that the concept of 'Relational Being' mainly aims to increase the capacity of students, teachers and other people to take part in relational processes in diverse contexts. For instance, he suggests that the classroom should be a collaborative environment.

Looking back at the participants' discourses in findings that criticised forms of interaction with school teachers, children rather seemed to be in need of recognition from teachers as individuals. In fact, Jones (2000, p.103) suggests that Japanese people have traditionally had

²³ 'Class' here is synonymous to classroom (Chapter 7), as children belong to one homeroom class where all the subjects take place. In majority of cases, the class members do not change for each subjects. This contrasts to the Western schooling where the participating students move the classrooms depending on the subjects.

difficulty in using terms such as ‘the individual’, and, for this reason, it is common to refer to children as ‘units of society’. Additionally, the notion of *Seken* was introduced in relation to *Bocci* in Chapter 7. Revisiting this concept, *Seken* is a bonding of people who are acquaintances (Iwasaki, 2002). Iwasaki explains that each Japanese person lives as a member of *Seken* rather than as individuals who comprise society. From Jones and Iwasaki’s points, it is clear that Japanese people have traditionally not been seen as individuals, and this is the same in the pedagogical setting. Indeed, humanity and social science knowledge in Japan is adopted from that of Western society. However, this does not mean that the state of Japanese society can fully be understood in the same manner as the West, as Japanese society is relational. As Gergen (2009) states, the concept of ‘Relational Being’ is a criticism of, or another approach to, conventional Western thinking about the bounded individual being. To these extents, Gergen’s account and proposal, especially in education, are not well suited to the Japanese context.

The preceding chapter referred to Aoki’s (2005b) approach in categorising types of school curriculum: ‘curriculum-as-plan’ and ‘curriculum-as-lived experiences’. To recapitulate, ‘curriculum as-plan’ is imposed by a broad context, such as the Ministry of Education at the country level. ‘Curriculum-as-lived experience’, on the other hand, values the pedagogical process experienced by both students and teachers in the classroom. Teachers are, in this way, expected to be improvisational rather than to provide a set curriculum. Nevertheless, fully moving away from the curriculum-as-plan is a risky shift, because it would rely heavily on improvisation (Wallin, 2013). Thus, Wallin suggests that rather than being completely improvisational, schools should attempt to balance the two kinds of pedagogy. In the findings, the children in this research appeared to put significant value on relationships, but it seems to be too intense so that they feel they cannot fall behind academically at school. Regarding Aoki’s (2005b) assertion on curricula, children’s individualities are not being considered sufficiently in Japanese school pedagogy. Intensely seeking harmony can mean ignoring individuals by nature (Aoki, 2005a). Indeed, Funakoshi (2015), an education counsellor, suggests that schools should recognise the group as made up of individuals, rather than seeing individuals through the lens of a group.

Following these considerations, Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) *rhizome* approach appeared useful (see Chapter 3 section 3.1-4). The *rhizome* approach does not take bounded individualism as the fundamental point through which relational aspects are discussed, as in

Gergen's work and Western thoughts. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari's argument begins from the relational (*molar*) rather than the individual (*molecular*) perspective, which more closely resembles the Japanese context. Dahlberg and Moss (2005; 2007) apply the *rhizome* approach in their works, and suggest its value in seeing pedagogical practice as a process of *becoming*. By citing Deleuze, Dahlberg and Moss criticise the general focus on outcomes rather than the pedagogical process in education.

Processes are becomings, and aren't to be judged by some final result but by the way they proceed and their power to continue, as with [...] nonsubjective individuations (Deleuze, 1995, p.146).

It is, however, not to say that they see less value in educational results. They are simply trying to put more weight and value on the pedagogical process rather than *just* the outcome. Associated with this, they try to acknowledge individual differences according to the philosophy of difference that Deleuze (1968) developed in *Difference and Repetition*. In the past, childhood research has treated adulthood as a complete state and a destination for children (Chapter 3 section 3.1-1). More recent attempts to see children as competent beings have been a significant development, but most approaches still maintain a certain level of consideration that adulthood is a goal (result) that children should aim at. Alternatively, Dahlberg and Moss (2005; 2007) celebrate the variation in processes of becoming, which allows for diverse outcomes.

Dahlberg and Moss's criticism of the focus on results in pedagogical settings mirrors children's accounts of school, in that they perceive that their school teachers do not recognise their individuality and the classroom processes. In this sense, it appears that for children, school is a place which focuses on outcomes, while Juku put more emphasis on the pedagogical process. To address this situation, one may suggest that teachers should spend more quality time with students. However, it appears that the amount of time teachers spend interacting with students is lessening. For example, the recent surveys from OECD (2014b) and Yokohama City Board of Education (2014) revealed that school teachers do not have substantial time to spend with students. According to the OECD survey (2014b), school teachers in Japan work an average of 54 hours a week, in comparison to the international average of 38 hours. In relation to this, the Yokohama City Board of Education (2014) warns that teachers are under increasing burdens that do not allow them to spend sufficient face-to-face time with students. In Yokohama, teachers work on average around 11 hours at school and additional hours at home on weekdays. Additionally, they work on average

around two hours at school and extra hours at home over the weekend. The kinds of work that teachers consider time-consuming are dealing with school evaluations, taking part in meetings and dealing with parents (Yokohama City Board of Education, 2014). In this survey, teachers themselves raised concerns about having difficulties in their capacity to interact with students individually. In this respect, it would appear that Juku benefits children, and even school teachers. The next section will consider children's experiences of attending Juku.

9.2-2 Children's experiences at Juku

In terms of the Juku, its significance appeared to be fourfold for children, according to their own accounts. Firstly, Juku appears to be a part of school for children. This is because Juku attendance is a normalised activity for the participants of this research. Secondly, children consider Juku a place to study. As the findings in Chapter 7 and the above section indicated, children go to school to spend time with other children. Thus, it seems in several respects that Juku have taken over the function of studying from school. Thirdly, children identify benefits in Juku attendance in most cases. Yet, some negative aspects persist, such as time poverty (see Chapter 6 section 6.5), which will be explored thoroughly in relation to time in a later section. Finally, participants of the research felt privileged to attend Juku. As has been repeated throughout this thesis, Juku is a luxury educational investment. To this extent, there may be a gap in access to an extra-curricular experience for some children depending on their family's financial situation.

Considering the above findings, children appeared to generally appreciate Juku because of flexibility in their choices. Findings indicated that there are several children who have had a bad experience in a Juku they previously attended, but they do like their current Juku because of their good relationships with the teachers. This positive, or otherwise not necessarily negative, experience in Juku is also suggested by Miyashita (1996) (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-6). Furthermore, in relation to the discussion on findings about school in the above section, school fails to put emphasis on the educational process. To compensate this absence, children appear to value the educational processes in Juku, though the result is as important as it is in school. This point confirms Fukaya's (1977) suggestion that children see Juku as a 'second school' in contrast to the 'first school' (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-6). It also extends Komiyama's (2000) specification for the factors in Chapter 2 that drive the development of the Juku industry, which are:

1. Meritocracy
2. Gap between levels of textbooks and entrance examinations
3. Decrease in educational function of local communities and families
4. Increase in disposable income
5. Intensification of entrance examination war
6. Entrance examination system

(Komiyama, 2000, p.34)

Children appear to value Juku because they can find their preferred pedagogical process from diverse options. This, in turn, is also children's criticism of school, where individuals become less visible in the collective. In this way, the following statement can be considered: school pedagogy seems to be functioning only from the top-down (molar-molecular) approach and missing the recognition of a bottom-up constitution (molecular-molar). Such a situation could cause, or already have caused, a lack of confidence in schooling, both for children and parents with regard to school teaching and learning. This point will be discussed in a later section on relationships. Subsequently, Juku appears to positively fill the gap in schools' pedagogical approach by recognising children as molecular. Nevertheless, it is not to say that Juku function positively for children altogether. As chapter 6 highlighted, Juku attendance entails the issue of time poverty, which leads to less time spent with family and friends. Attending Juku also means double or triple the amount of study, including homework that children have to do within an already limited amount of time. Juku plays a positive role at the cost of children's personal time in daily lives.

9.2-3 Children's time experience

Chapter 6 explored children's experiences in after-school activities extensively in relation to time. Time can be considered a key element in the lives of human beings (Adam, 2006). Despite many attempts to change, the nature of studies of childhood has seen adulthood as a future goal, and for this reason, this research considered how time has significance in children's daily experiences. Time can be considered in terms of different stages in childhood, perspectives, aspirations, reflections and so forth. This section first reviews the findings, and moves the discussion of children's time experiences forward.

From the findings, five themes emerged: constraint, agency, sense of responsibility, relationships, and the future. Firstly, children experience a constraint in their time due to their attendance at Juku and/or out-of-school activities (OSAs). As both Juku and OSAs take place after school hours, they unavoidably limit the time that children can use as they please.

This results in children having less time to spend with family and friends, and their workload becomes dense. In this way, they are time-poor. Secondly, there is a shift in levels of agency across childhood in relation to after-school activity attendance. Decision making for attendance is primarily done for children by parents in the early years of childhood. Yet, as children grow, they gain more autonomy and ability to make their own decisions, and parents also recognise and respect their voices more. Third, in association to the shift in levels of agency, children gain a sense of duty and responsibility in their own life as they grow older. For instance, children's discourse about Juku attendance changes from 'I must attend' to 'I want to attend' to achieve their own goals in the future. Fourth, older children in particular value the characteristics and skills of the Juku teachers in comparison to school teachers. As a consequence, children put a primary importance on relationships with friends rather than with teachers at school, but do not necessarily need friends at Juku. Finally, the notion of futurity appears to be an abstract idea, particularly for younger children. Due to this tendency, some children may see the future-oriented investment (Juku) as a hardship, and/or there may be a gap in perceptions of Juku attendance between themselves and adults. Older children, on the other hand, associate Juku with their future and appreciate the additional support.

Additionally, in relation to these themes, children have a particular perception of '*Gambaru*', wherein people constantly keep making efforts but without an absolutely clear idea of their aim (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-1). *Gambaru* is associated with the amount of time put in to the work, rather than the output achieved through it. In this respect, Juku can be seen as a facilitator for children's *Gambaru* to extend the time they spend making an effort in studying outside of school.

Furthermore, the present study focused on the daily lives of girls, and for this reason, it was assumed that there would be some gendered characteristics in their experiences. Japanese women often face tension between their work and family lives, and it was presumed that the participants of this study would have some level of gender perspective with regards to their education. Despite the presumption, it appeared that gender-related matters are not yet a concern for the participant children (Chapter 6). Kimura (2009a), Tsutsumi (2012) and Ueno's (2012) works confirm this point, suggesting that women and men share similar interests in career opportunities until the end of higher education (see Chapter 2 section 2.5). It can therefore be considered that education functions as gender-neutral, at least until the end. Nevertheless, it is not to say that the gender divide is insignificant. It still persists in

terms of subject choices in higher education and the proportion of people in managerial roles in the labour market (see Chapter 2 section 2.5) (Gender Equality Bureau, 2013a). In fact, those older girls in study who had already decided what they want to study in university had chosen psychology, nursery teaching, midwifery, etc., which are conventionally the kind of subjects women tend to undertake. It was also evident in this research that some girls saw their mothers as role models, and this may influence the gender-divide (see Chapter 7 section 7.4). This suggests that although gender appears to be insignificant in girls' discourse, they may face some tension between work and family in the future.

There also appear to be age (or otherwise life-stage) specific differences in experiences of Juku within childhood. The themes that emerged through the findings suggest a difference between younger and older children in having agency, valuing teachers at Juku rather than at school, and their perspectives and orientation towards the future. By exploring children's daily lives, particularly in relation to their after-school activities, it appears that these activities have significance in children's perceptions and experiences of time. The notion of time also appeared with regard to children's relationships in their lives. Hence, this point will be discussed further in relation to the significance of relationships in the next section.

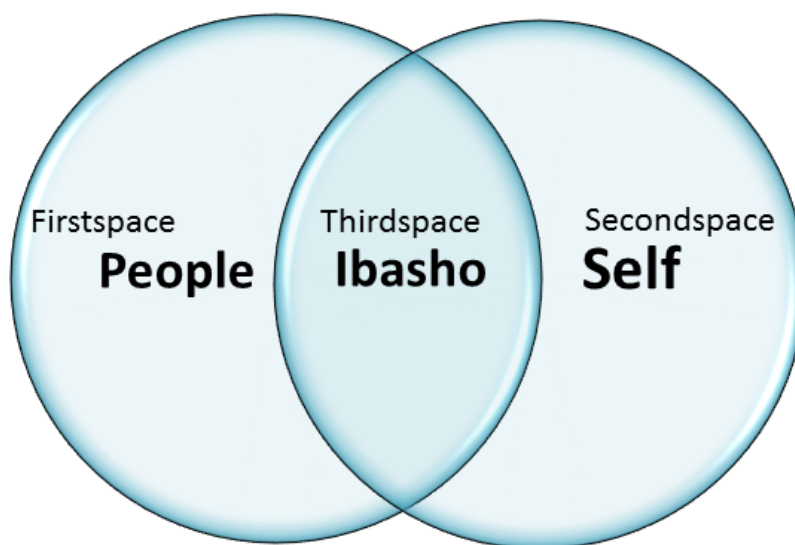
9.2-4 Children's experiences of relationship

One of the methodological tools in this research was the use of an eco-map, in order to explore children's lives and relationships with people in each life space, including home, school and after-school activities. Community was also initially included as a life space, but it became apparent that children hardly have any interactions there. This analysis thereby focused on these three spaces: home, school and Juku. From the eco-map and children's interviews, it was apparent that the relationships with people had significant value in their daily lives in life spaces. At home, for instance, children are content when they have good relationships with family members. Among them, mothers appeared particularly important for the participants. This is because the girls in this research see the mothers as their role models, and interact with each other the most in comparison to the other family members. This section will discuss these findings further, and will include consideration of concepts of time that emerged from the relational aspect of children's lives.

In school, relationships with friends are emphasised in contrast to its principal function of pedagogy. The section on school above highlighted that there are distinctive notions of *Ibashi*, *Bocci*, *Air*, and *Seken* in Japanese society. Chapter 3 introduced the concept of

Ibasho as ‘a place that means something for oneself respective to his social relationship’ (Hagiwara, 2001a, p.63). Likewise, findings in chapter 7 reinforced that *Ibasho* is about relationships but that a person must also be able to feel the sense of ‘self’ within. These aspects mirror the theories of *Thirdspace* (Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996) and the ‘Relational Being’ (Gergen, 2009). As Chapter 3 (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-2) explored, the *Thirdspace* is a space between Firstspace (the ‘real’ world) and the Secondspace (spatial imagination of the reality)(Soja, 1996). Applying this notion to children’s perception of *Ibasho*, it can be considered as a Thirdspace, which functions as ‘lived space’ or a ‘space of representation’, between relationships with people (Firstspace) and the self (Secondspace) (Lefebvre, 1991, p.43). In explaining the notion of ‘space of representation’, Lefebvre (1991, p.43) argues that ‘it may be qualified in various ways: it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic’. Following children’s discourses on *Ibasho*, it is indeed ‘fluid and dynamic’: it is neither about people nor self, but it is about both simultaneousness and their mutuality (Figure 9-1).

Figure 9-1 *Ibasho* as a Thirdspace



Regarding the ‘Relational Being’, Gergen (2009) attempts to take a step away from traditional individualist considerations about a person’s being (see Chapter 5 section 5.1). Gergen argues that relationships are at the core of individuals. For Gergen, all the meanings people have in society emerge from ‘co-action’ that is mutually agreed and constrained through relationships. This idea seems radical, and for this reason, Gergen tries to answer possible criticism, which is concerned for the self as inexistent outside of a relationship. As an answer, Gergen agrees that people do act alone, but that the intellectual part of them is a

product of relationships.

Surely, many of our actions are carried out alone, without others present or privy. But in what sense are these actions 'our own possessions', uncontaminated by relationships? [...] To act intelligibly at all is to participate in relationship (Gergen, 2009, p.39).

Further, Gergen makes four central proposals in relation to 'Relational Being':

- 1) Mental discourse originates in human relationships.
- 2) Mental discourse functions in the service of relationships.
- 3) Mental discourse is action within relationships.
- 4) Discursive action is embedded in traditions of co-action. (Gergen, 2009, p.70-75)

For the first point, Gergen argues that people's universal understanding of a certain concept emerges out of relationships (co-action). In terms of the second proposal, the concepts and words people gained through co-action has a function to cause actions in relationships: words and phrases bring consequences and actions. Third, there must be ' coordinations of words and action ' (Gergen, 2009, p.73). For example, one would associate a smile with something fun or happy. On the contrary, a smile is not associated with anger or sadness. To this extent, people's action (performance) is universal, and meaning emerges out of relationships. Finally, it is not only the performing person who needs to bring out the meaning that emerged out of co-actions but also the person who receives it. Thus, mental discourse and meaning are not possessions of a person but those of relationships. From these points, it can be considered that children do share the idea of the meaning of *Ibasho*. But to know that they share does not help in the consideration of *Ibasho*. In fact, Gergen (2009) states that the above four proposals are the ingredients that are required to further the consideration of 'Relational Beings'.

One of the further considerations in 'Relational Being' is 'multi-being'. A person's multi-being is socially constructed through relationships. Through their relationships, people know what is and is not acceptable in social conduct. Additionally, people gain an idea of who they are through relationships; for example, a woman becomes a wife when she marries, and then a mother if a baby is born. Thirdly, co-action brings a person into contact with other people's scenarios, meaning that certain types of interaction can be acceptable only in particular relationships. Gergen (2009) uses these three points to argue that there are a multitude of possibilities in how relationships take place and how they form 'being'. To this extent, the world as people know it is not stable. Stability in daily lives can be achieved

through agreements in relationships (*co-active agreements*) (*ibid.*, p.138); however, such agreements are not uniform, and variation may cause disharmony.

The concepts of ‘Relational Being’ and ‘Multi-being’ can be applied to the meaning of ‘*Ibasho*’, as they suggest fragility in the meaning. For example, Gergen adds that there are two additions to the concept: affirmation and denial. Through relationships, people either affirm or deny a person by seeing or not seeing her as an intelligible and worthy agent. In this way, the existence of a person is determined by their relationships as Gergen suggests below.

The removal of affirmation is the end of identity (Gergen, 2009, p.168).

A failure to understand is not a failure to grasp the essence of the other’s feelings, but an inability to participate in the kind of scenario the other is inviting (*ibid.*, p.165).

The accounts the participant children shared largely confirm Hagiwara’s (2001a) conceptualisation²⁴ of *Ibasho* as set out in Chapter 3 section 3.2-2.

Following the above consideration of *Ibasho* in relation to *Thirdspace* and ‘Relational Being’, it appears that *Ibasho* is not only about physical but also emotional space. The characteristic of *Ibasho* consisting of self, others and mutual recognition, which was illustrated with Gergen’s (2009) ‘Relational Being’, can also be considered in relation to Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) ‘relational becoming’. Gergen’s concept remains useful in exploring Japanese children’s lives aside from the pedagogical context, but for a matter of consistency, Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘relational becoming’ will be applied as a tool to discuss *Ibasho* below.

To review other relational concepts, *Bocci* is about being alone and also being perceived by others (in *Seken*) as not being able to make friends (Asahi Shinbun, 2014). *Air* is a sense of having to share an agreement about certain things among people that are present. *Ibasho*, *Bocci* and *Air* are interlinked to each other, but there is a variation in perceptions about these

²⁴ 1. *Ibasho* exists with the feeling of ‘self’;
2. *Ibasho* occurs based on the relationship of oneself and others within mutual recognition;
3. *Ibasho* occurs when a person with his or her physical body comes into contact with other people, matters and objects;
4. *Ibasho* is about a person’s acquisition of his or her position in the world (in relation to other people, matters and objects), and it leads to one’s course of action in life (Hagiwara, 2001, p.63).

terms in different life spaces and institutions, such as those explored in this study. Among those spaces, children are particularly concerned with *Ibasho* in the context of school. This aspect is also clear in the origin of '*Ibasho*', which emerged from problems of school-phobia in the late 1980s in Japan (Ishimoto, 2009) (Chapter 3 section 3.2-2). The particular significance of *Ibasho* in school emerges from the nature of collective activities and maintaining harmony. In such a context, children often consider places with friends as *Ibasho*. Children are thereby constantly worried about the state of their own *Ibasho*, and they avoid being *Bocci* by reading and maintaining the *Air*.

The characteristics of *Ibasho* differ in the different setting as stated above. At home, children in this research want to and are certain that they have good relationships with family members. Yet, they consider their own room, where they can relax alone, as *Ibasho*. In this manner, *Ibasho* is concerned with personal relationships at school, while at home *Ibasho* does not necessarily entail other people in the space. That said, children appear to think they can see their own room as *Ibasho*, because they believe firmly that they have it at school. Shimizu (2012) discussed the significance of the 'absence of *Ibasho*', in contrast to having it (see Chapter 3 section 3.2-2). She discussed that the 'absence of *Ibasho*' is comparable to 'absence of self'. To review briefly, 'self' here is inclusive of relationships, indicating one's realised and recognised position within it. Shimizu (2012, p.77) raised several examples of a sense of *Ibasho*'s absence in interviews with junior high school children, such as loneliness, struggling to keep up with other people, and a feeling of difference between self and the collective other. Hence, absence of *Ibasho* can be a severe concern for children in Japan. Following her argument, it can be considered that even if children are alone in their room, this *Ibasho* is essentially accompanied by the sense of relationship at school (see Chapter 7): the perceptions of *Ibasho* at school and home are therefore interlinked.

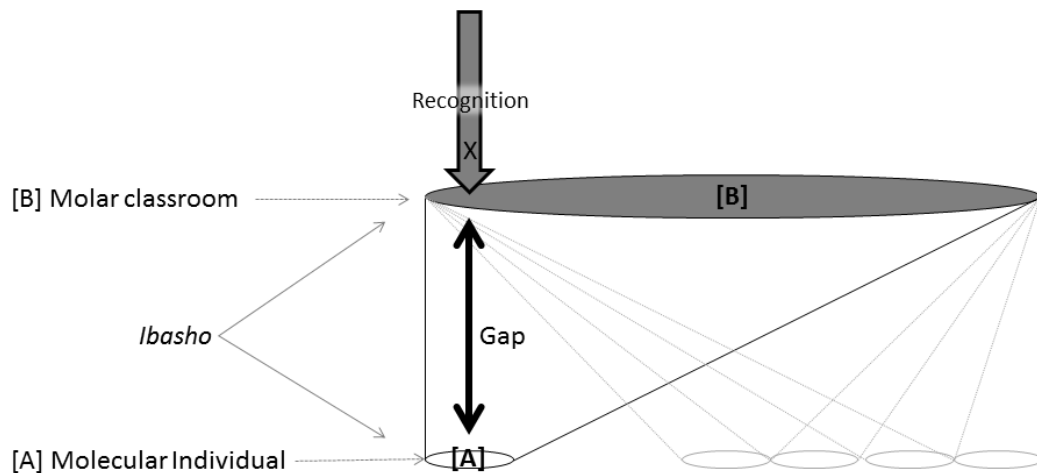
In this sense, the idea of *Ibasho* can be understood in the frame of the phenomenological body that was suggested by Watson and colleagues (2012) in the Western context (see Chapter 4). To review, it focuses on children's experiences at the micro (molecular) level. However, there is one significant difference between *Ibasho* and the phenomenological body. *Ibasho* entails a danger of having a sense of non-existence of self. When someone says 'there is no *Ibasho*', it suggests a sense of the self not being accepted and being non-existent in society (or otherwise in *Seken*). Regarding the significance of school in children's lives, it

can be considered that their lived society is largely equivalent to the school context. The importance of the school context can be influenced by children taking a good family relationship for granted, and having weak community ties. This is why children have strategies in order to maintain *Ibasho*, such as avoiding being *Bocci* and reading the *Air*. Finally, at Juku, children do not really consider *Ibasho*, because it is a place to make an effort in studying (*Gambaru*) and not to meet people. To this extent, children have different approaches to *Ibasho* in school and Juku.

Comparing *Ibasho* in the school and Juku contexts, it seems there are two aspects that can bring about the differences in its meanings. One is the differences in fixity and flexibility between them, and the other is the recognition of molecular individuals. In terms of the first aspect, a Juku is, as has been repeated in this study, a private education provider and children and their parents are customers. On a number of occasions, participant children talked about changing Juku from one to another, depending on their satisfaction with the services provided, such as educational achievement and relationships with teachers. As a consequence, most participants were satisfied by the Juku they attended at the time of interview, having changed to the one that was well-suited to them. On the other hand, children hardly have any flexibility once they are enrolled in a school unless they have special circumstances, such as family relocation. Thus, in order to have a passable and good school life, children would try to establish *Ibasho* among classmates, friends and so on. If a child does not manage to find *Ibasho*, then life itself may become quite a lonely affair as Hanako's quote illustrated in Chapter 7.

Regarding the second aspect, Figure 9-2 depicts the classroom environment in school, where the individual child is situated for the majority of the time. Applying a *rhizomatic* approach and considering *molecular* and *molar* assemblages, the individual child can be seen as molecular [A] and the class as molar [B]. In this Figure, *Ibasho* can be both [A] and [B] because individual children make sense of both the existence of the self and their social position in relationships.

Figure 9-2 Children's *Ibasho* at the molecular and molar levels



Note: It looks as if the system is hierarchical, but this is only for simplicity in depicting the position and relationships of individuals in the molar system. In reality, it should be on the same level, extending horizontally.

In the school pedagogical context, molecular individuality is overlooked, and children are perceived as a molar collection. The participants' impressions of school teachers not understanding them well can be the result of teachers seeing the class through a molar lens. This essentially echoes with Aoki's (2005b) 'curriculum-as-plan' perspective, which misses the recognition of individuals and their lived experiences (the gap between [A] and [B]): recognition stops at the molar level (arrow X towards [B]). In finding, establishing and agreeing *Ibasho*, it is important to feel the sense of existence. The individual's *Ibasho* is constituted of relationships [B], confirmed by the people in the circle, and the individual [A] needs to feel at ease. Thus, the realisation of *Ibasho* is dynamic, and one's physical and emotional place is constantly being negotiated.

In relation to the above, it is also important to notice that *Ibasho* appears to be particularly experienced in the context of the present time. Deleuze's concept of phenomenological and relational time is applicable here. For children and adults, it is essential to have *Ibasho now* rather than at any other time. Chapter 3 section 3.2-1 explored Deleuze's (1968) discussion about the notion of time other than *rhizome*. To briefly revisit the discussion, Deleuze's theoretical work also includes an exploration of the concept of time. For Deleuze, a present event has significance in determining what meaning past events had and have, and what possibilities the future holds. In such a way, all events take place in the becoming in present time, and they constantly change the meanings of other time dimensions. For this reason, I

suggest that the understanding of *Ibasho* can be advanced further using Deleuze's notion of time. Applying Deleuze's time, *Ibasho* can be seen as a dynamic and phenomenological space, constantly undulating and transforming the state of becoming aside from unidirectional time. Unidirectional time can be seen in the school and policy contexts, where a certain agenda is set and activities take place in order to achieve that agenda. Thus, this research agrees with the four characteristics of *Ibasho* suggested by Hagiwara (2001a, p.63), but also proposes adding the significance of time to them.

Regarding the notion of time in relational terms, Chapter 3 section 3.3 proposed a new way of utilising Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecology model, by adding the notion of time. Following the analysis of children's life perspectives, *Ibasho* and Deleuze's conceptualisation of time, the suggested approach requires one more additional concept of time. To briefly recapitulate Bronfenbrenner's work, his model considered that children extend their active participation from the micro to macro levels of society as they develop. For this reason, this research initially criticised the detachment of children from the broader social world. Instead, Bronfenbrenner proposed that children should be situated in the wide macro system from the start, and that children increase their participation in society over linear time. In these respects, the new approach in Bronfenbrenner's ecology model stressed the following (Chapter 3 section 3.1-1):

- Children are situated in all levels of the systems.
- Children actively influence, and are influenced by, the macro system from the start.
- There is an increase in children's participation in each system over linear time.

As was seen in the time-related findings, children did indicate that there are different levels of agency that they can exercise across their childhood years (linear time) (Chapter 6). However, as suggested in the above section, children's perception of *Ibasho* and younger children's tendency to focus on present time and older children on the future indicate that their idea of time is not linear but dynamic. To this extent, Deleuze's conception of time allows the rejection of the linear-time approach by adopting a dynamic and cyclical one. Nevertheless, it is not to say that linearity of time should be fully rejected. Rather, dynamic (cyclical) time coexists and interrelates with linear time. Brannen and Nilsen's (2002) work which is based on empirical research in Western countries supports this point, arguing that there is variation in how young people make sense of time. In their study they cite Nowotny (1994), whose work suggested that present time is extended with the increasing prominence

of cyclical time.

The extended present stresses the necessity of structuring but also the possibilities of re-structuring. It tries to diminish the uncertainties for the future by recalling cyclicity and seeking to combine it with linearity. The present is no longer interpreted merely as part of the way on a straight line leading to a future open to progress, but as part of a cyclical movement (Nowotny, 1994, p.58; cited in Brannen and Nilsen, 2002).

These points made by Brannen, Nilsen and Nowotny are important in this research. As much as it is vital to recognise that children's perspective of their daily experience tends to focus on the present time, especially in relation to *Ibasho*, it cannot be forgotten that Juku attendance involves some sense of future prospects, which is situated in linear time. Thus, it is not appropriate to replace the new approach suggested for the Bronfenbrenner's ecology model with linear time. Rather, it is more suitable to add a dynamic (cyclical) time dimension to recognise its multiplicity.

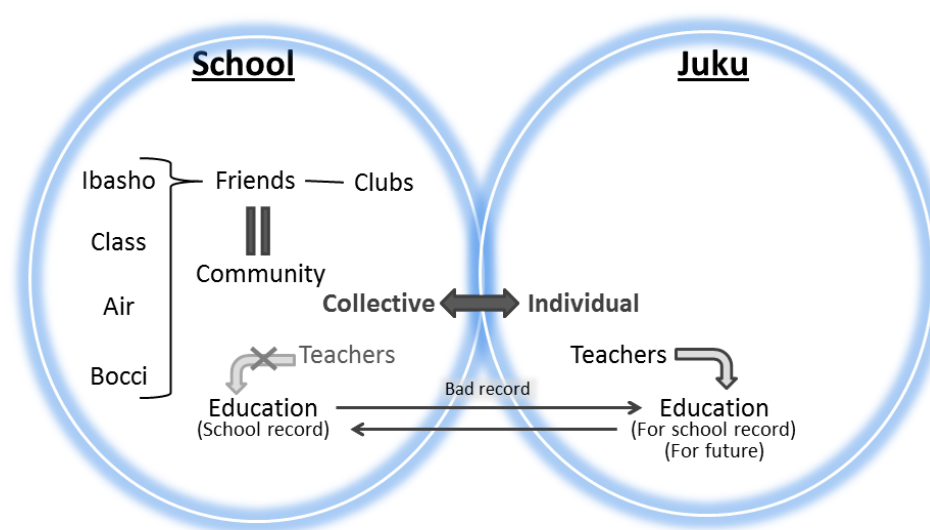
9.2-5 Summary of findings

The findings explored in this section can be summarised in three key points as were seen in section 9.1, which Figure 9-3 encapsulates. Firstly, schools' pedagogies appear to be unfavourable for children. The left side of Figure 9-3 shows the characteristics of children's school lives. Rather than education, children often focus on friendship in the school context, which entails the notions of *Ibasho*, *Air*, and *Bocci*. This aspect seems a result of Japanese pedagogy that values school classes as communities. Due to children's depreciation of education at school, teachers appear to lose significance as educators.

Secondly, children's experiences at Juku are not necessarily negative, and this aspect is shown on the right side of the figure below. In contrast to school teachers, Juku teachers seem to have more educational significance to children, possibly because of their appreciation of individual needs. Regarding these two key findings, it is evident that school and Juku complement each other: school provides a community, and Juku fills the educational needs. Juku appears educationally beneficial for children, but perceptions about it vary across childhood. Overall, Juku takes a negative role by constraining children's time, but children increasingly consider Juku education worthwhile as they grow older. This characteristic relates to the notion of *Gambaru*, which measures effort making by the amount of time put in.

Finally, relationships, especially in terms of *Ibasho*, have significance in children's lives. *Ibasho*'s functions vary according to life-space. Figure 9-3 notes *Ibasho* only in the school context, because it appears to be the most fundamental there, and affects *Ibasho* in other places. The notion of *Ibasho* can be extended also to consider the existence of self, and the link between relationships and individuality, this was explored through three approaches: Thirdspace, Relational being and *rhizomatic* approach. Among these, the *rhizomatic* approach is applied to further consider the well-being of children in the following section.

Figure 9-3 Summary of finding



9.3 Implications of the present study

From the findings and discussions of the present study, three implications can be suggested. First, the meaning and the function of *Ibasho* highlighted that children's worlds appear to be romanticised by adults, appropriating institutionalisation and scholarisation. For this, there remains a need to incorporate children's voices in understanding their lives. Secondly, some physical spaces that have been conventionally considered as primary seem to have little significance for children in the present study. Instead, relational space should be considered when looking at children's lives in the Japanese context. Finally, the emphasis that Japanese children place on their well-being appears to be different from that of children in other cultures. Thus, child well-being needs to be considered according to the context and culture in which children are situated from their perspective.

Firstly, Japanese childhood appears to be romanticized with respect to the value of institutionalisation and scholarisation. For instance, being scholarised in the school context, children appear to feel obliged to fit in by reading the *Air* and finding *Ibasho*. *Ibasho* is

associated with relationships with other people through which the self is realised. Here, if a child is unsuccessful in finding *Ibasho*, she may see her self-existence as being jeopardised. Thus, *Ibasho* highlights the significance of individuality within a crowd for children. Despite children's interpretation and use of *Ibasho*, governmental policy makers interpret it differently. As far as the government is concerned, *Ibasho* is childcare or a safety net (see Chapter 2 section 2.4), which is dissimilar to children's understandings. By romanticising that children should be institutionalised and/or scholarised, children's perceptions appear to be disregarded. Thus, coming closer to understanding children's lives from their point of view remains an essential issue for adults and policy-makers.

For the second implication, physical spaces appear to have less importance than relational spaces for Japanese children. Childhood has conventionally been considered in relation to three physical spaces, home, school and community, and their alternative significance can be seen through two examples. First is the diminishing function of community for children. The findings showed that children have disappeared from the community, and instead *Seken*, which is constituted of the people surrounding them, appears to have more importance for children in Japan. *Seken* operates as an institutional platform where children seek to present themselves in the way they are expected; for example, by making an effort (*Gambaru*), which is measured by length of time, and this appears to facilitate after-school activity attendance. The other example is schools failing as a pedagogical space and time, due to their emphasis on and value in harmonious collectiveness at the expense of individual needs. Consequently, Juku is able to thrive by satisfying such needs, though it entails some issues, such as time poverty. In the context where physical spaces appear to be failing in their function, it can be suggested that children's experiences of relational space should be explored in order to consider how it can be applied to physical space.

Finally, this research explored how children perceive their own well-being. From the findings, it became apparent that the conventional Western understanding of child well-being does not fit approaches exploring that of Japanese children. For instance, international comparative data on child well-being appears to be interpreted according to Western standards rather than with understanding of the Japanese context. Japanese ministerial documents raise a concern that Japanese children and young people report 'low levels of self-esteem' (MEXT, 2014e) in comparison to children in other countries (Cabinet Office, 2014a). As the findings of this research have shown, individuals and the mass are mutually constitutive of relationships in the Japanese context, instead of individuals forming

relationships, which is more common in the Western context. Likewise, the well-being model that is often adopted in international discourse appears to be predominantly based on Western ideology, and does not sufficiently consider cultural diversity, as discussed in section 8.2. In order to inform the molar level of the context of well-being, it is essential to understand the societal situation through children's molecular voices.

9.4 Limitations and future research direction

In this section, I will reflect on the limitations of the research, and propose future research directions following it.

9.4-1 Assessment of sampling

Though this research is innovative in considering children's experiences in after-school activities, in particular at Juku, and their association to children's well-being, there are some limitations in sampling. The sampling specification of this research was girls who are or have experience of attending Juku, and are in grades P5 (5th) to H3 (12th)²⁵ in areas near Tokyo. This study initially aimed to have both girls and boys as participants. However, perhaps due to the method of snowball sampling and me being female, girls tended to be more willing to participate in the study in comparison to boys. For this reason, boys were under-represented and a decision was made to focus on girls' experiences. In total, thirty girls in the age range participated in the interviews. Due to the small-scale of the study, it would be problematic to see the participants as the representative of children who attend Juku. In particular, there is a need to include children from rural regions as well, because the extent of competitiveness there may be different from in urban areas (Chapter 2 section 2.3-2).

To add to the issue of under-representation, there is a lack of certain groups of people in this research: boys and children who do not attend Juku. In terms of boys, this study was initially concerned about the gender perspective in Juku attendance. However, probably because of the focus on the girls, the gender-related view hardly appeared in the findings. The same remark can be applied to the lack of children who do not have any experience of attending Juku. Juku is a private education and a luxury good. In this respect, there could also be children who want to attend Juku but cannot for some reason; for example, family finance. Furthermore, children in this study stated that there is a need to attend Juku because

²⁵ P: primary school H: high school

of their dissatisfaction with school pedagogy. However, using the sample in this research, it is not clear if the majority of children are dissatisfied with school education and/or feel that Juku attendance is necessary. Thus, to better understand children's Juku-related experiences, as well as their perspectives on well-being, it is essential to include those from a more diverse context. Last, but not least, the data collected for the present research is cross-sectional. Although the profiles of the participants covered ages between ten and 18, the sample for each age is very small. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argue, life is a *rhizome* and we are constantly in a state of becoming. From this perspective, the understanding of children's lives across childhood can be more thorough if the research becomes longitudinal with constant assessment of the measures used.

9.4-2 Assessment of fieldwork tools

In the methodology (see Chapter 5 section 5.2-2), it was highlighted that eco-maps were employed in the data collection process in order to capture children's relationships and their quality. It was assumed that it would be an engaging practice between the participants and myself, which would make the interviewing process friendly. It indeed worked, and the children seemed to have enjoyed it, using various coloured pens, and thinking about the people around them. However, the significance of the eco-map data was very small. For example, because I asked children to feel free to write down the eco-map as they liked, it was difficult to compare them. Secondly, as this research has made clear, most Juku attending children are time poor. This means that it was already a challenge to complete the interview, and on some occasions children had to rush to work on the eco-map. Finally, children were instructed to place people around them on the eco-map according to the quality of the relationship they have, such as good, normal and bad. Categorising people into these three groups appeared troublesome for the participant children, as the idea of 'good relationship' is surprisingly ambiguous.

Furthermore, it can be suggested that interviewing as a method may not fully be able to capture children's experiences. In fact, Spyrou (2015) and Lewis (2010) argue that there is more meaning in children's silences than in what they share verbally. Spyrou indicates that there is too much emphasis in trying to listen to children's voices that researchers may be missing out what is hidden behind the words. James and Prout's (1997a) significant work in the sociology of childhood indeed stressed that a useful method to look into children's lives was ethnography. Additionally, the methodology identified that there are distinctive levels

of respect depending on personal relationships and status in Japanese society. Considering this cultural characteristic, it was assumed that there could be a difficulty in trying to maintain the similar if not equal position between the child participants and myself as a researcher. Despite my effort to make the interview environment friendly, it was inevitable that some children conversed very formally. In this case, it is clear that children do choose to share different matters depending on people and place. Thus, it can be suggested that there may be something missing in the interviews, which may, in fact, have illuminated a significant aspect of their lives. Accordingly, the use of various data collection methods is desirable. Such variation may bring about a better understanding of the concepts that are still ambiguous. This point relates to the next reflection on concepts.

9.4-3 Assessment of the concept

As was discussed above, the concept of a ‘good relationship’ is rather unclear. This aspect was observed from children’s struggles in interpreting it to work on the eco-map. Such uncertainty in meaning can essentially cause trouble in the discussion of this study, as it takes place around the concept of relationships. However, it is also undeniable that relationships matter to children. Therefore, it can be suggested that a more thorough understanding and clarification of the nature and quality of relationships can bring about a more cogent consideration of well-being, both for children and adults.

Another challenge in this study is the consideration of children’s rights to well-being. Chapter 4 referred to the rights-based approach to well-being, following the UNCRC. In accordance with Bradshaw et al.’s (2007) approach to well-being, the outcomes and gaps in levels of deprivation of children may be treated as a focus, which differs from what this thesis sought to explore. They indeed note that their rights-based approach contrasts with the child-centred understanding of (subjective) well-being. Certainly, children ought to have the rights established by the UNCRC (right *to* well-being), such as their development, education, and non-discrimination. In this respect, it can be considered that children’s subjective accounts of well-being that emerged in this study are realised and perceived in association with their right *in* well-being. As the empirical and present chapters discussed, children’s needs, such as material goods, were not apparent in their discourse. This is due to the likelihood that those who attend Juku have a basic life standard. In these accounts, children should maintain both rights *to* and *in* their well-being, and neither should be deficient in their lives.

9.4-4 Direction in future research: children, well-being and beyond

Following the above limitations and strengths, this section suggests a future research agenda. Four proposals can be made by reflecting on the above findings and considerations.

1. Assessing the significance of Juku and its relation to school;
2. Filling the gap in samples, e.g. boys, different ages and social classes;
3. A new recognition of non-Western consideration of childhood and well-being;
4. Consideration of non-Western culture increasingly adopting Western ideologies and the resulting conflict with conventional cultural norms.

Firstly, it emerged that the participants of this research actually value their Juku attendance for academic purposes. However, a concern remains as to what the role of the school is. As the literature and findings showed, there appears to be a loss of confidence in school for children and parents regarding the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, the new rule permitting the use of public assistance on educational support such as Juku (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-5) shows that Juku takes an essential role in Japanese education. If education is all about academic achievement and results, Juku can be a sole contributor. Even so, school still plays a significant role in children's lives, not only for education but also for life experiences. If, then, Juku were seen as a school, what may happen? To explore these matters, it would be useful to see what may come about under a new policy recommending collaboration between Juku and schools (see Chapter 2 section 2.3-5), and what children may make of life as a result.

Secondly, as the earlier section reflected, there are some groups of people who are missing from current explorations of Juku experiences. Though it is fruitful that we now have some insight into girls' perceptions about Juku and well-being, it does not lead to concrete understanding. In this case, there is a need to explore the experiences of people in the missing groups. Additionally, this study was a cross-sectional exploration, and the sample for each age group was too small to be able to compare characteristics. As we are aware, Juku is often considered as a future investment. To this extent, it can be beneficial to see the transition in experiences from young childhood to adulthood, and how this may influence certain aspects of well-being at different life stages.

Third, as was seen in relation to Gergen's discussion on pedagogical processes, the approaches used to consider childhood, well-being and education still seem to be largely Western-centric. This study contributes to non-Western considerations of these elements,

and stresses the need to recognise cultural variation. There is, indeed, a trend of exploring childhood and well-being internationally. However, if the core understanding is developed fundamentally based on Western ideas, it is obvious that there is a limit to the extension of knowledge. Thus, I propose a shift towards more inclusive theoretical considerations of childhood and well-being.

Finally, while the present study stresses the need for further understanding of cultural variation, it must be noted that Western, especially white, middle-class ideologies are increasingly spreading and being adopted in non-Western cultures. Children's dissatisfaction with the collective school setting could be, in this context, considered as a conflict between conventional collective Japanese ideology and the increasing penetration of individualistic Western norms. To this extent, it would be essential to look into the balance between the two and what positions school and Juku would take in such a societal change.

Aside from the above four proposals, there are three more areas of interest that should be explored. Firstly, there is a need to consider the outlier case of children in Akita. The existing data presented in section 2.3-2 showed that the proportion of Juku attendance is the lowest in the Akita prefecture in contrast to all other areas in Japan. While Juku is expected to be beneficial for children's academic abilities, children in Akita achieve the best in the national academic evaluation (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, 2014). This highlights a potential contradiction about the assumed association between children's Juku attendance and academic achievement. While such data exists and some assumptions are made, the exact reason behind this characteristic remains unknown. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the interrelationship between children in Akita, school and Juku.

Secondly, it should be considered that Juku may be used other than just as a means to improve children's academic performance. For instance, policy which has sought the expansion of women's opportunities to work appears to have weakened people's acceptance of the gendered division of labour (Gender Equality Bureau, anon-c). Furthermore, the number of double-income families has also increased in the past decade. Correspondingly, it was essential to transform the social infrastructure by providing more childcare to support women's employment, and the recent policy such as *After-school Comprehensive Plan for Children* does attempt to do so. For this reason, there is a possibility that Juku may be, from the parents' perspectives, utilised as a form of childcare as well as a means of academic achievement. As such, it is important that parents' views are also considered.

Finally, the central significance of family members for children's well-being should be explored. The findings in this research showed that the establishment of *Ibasho*, individual

recognition at Juku, and relationship with significant others, particularly with family members, are influencing factors for children's well-being in Japan. In general, there is a lack of research exploring the association between family members and child well-being in Japan from children's perspectives. In this research, I have been unable given the sample to consider any variation of family types. The majority of the participants in this research had both parents and secure family finances. Thus, new research which focuses on the association between child well-being, families' financial circumstances and family members, as well as the diversification of family types, should further enrich current understanding about child well-being in Japan.

9.5 Final reflection on the research

This thesis sought to explore the under-studied field of children's Juku experiences and their relation to well-being in Japan. The accounts that emerged in the study were valuable additions to understanding these aspects. In particular, it is fruitful that the analysis of Juku life also portrayed that of school as well. Being able to explore Juku and school education altogether, it became evident that Japanese education is at the turning point to accept informal education alongside formal education. As Juku has long been treated with a *laissez-faire* approach, it is only very recently that relevant policies have been implemented. For this reason, it is still too early to evaluate these policies; however, this recent establishment of policies, for example promoting collaboration between Juku and school, shows a sign of opportunities for policy development. Other than through the collaboration of school and Juku educations, there are still aspects that need to be considered, such as children's health and safety, and assuring adequate Juku services.

While these are significant findings, a consideration needs to be made about the context of the research. Japanese society is highly collective and hierarchical, and these characteristics can make a difference in the research processes. For instance, this research highlighted how the extent of generational hierarchy may pose a question about the feasibility of conducting child-centred research. Furthermore, it became apparent that application of established Western theories regarding child well-being are unsuitable in this research, due to the distinctive social and relational context in Japan. As such, this research showed that children's perceptions and experiences are deeply embedded in their personal relationships, which are highlighted with the concept of *Ibasho*. What is drawn from children and young people's accounts is significant, and I am also aware of this from my experience. When I failed to find the *Ibasho* at school, it was challenging at times. However, finding the

Ibasho in the UK has helped me in re-establishing meaning in life. Hence, it is hoped that every child and young person is able to find their *Ibasho* to flourish their well-being. Despite the conclusion, this is not the end. As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, the construction of the *rhizome* is conjunctive ‘and...and...and...’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.98). Children’s lives are constantly changing, and so is the knowledge in this field. This study itself, therefore, represents ‘becoming’ knowledge of children’s well-being and Juku experiences in Japan.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Interview schedule

General

What is your school year?

How old are you now?

Was it far away to come here today?

Whom do you live with at home?

Do your relatives live close by?

How do you think your family relationship is? What makes you think so?

How is your relationship with your siblings?

How do you usually spend time with your family and friends?

Do you like school?

Do you participate in school clubs?

Do you have a hobby?

What are things that you like and dislike to do?

Are you attending any kind of after-school activities such as Juku and out-of-school activity?

Time line

Since when are you attending Juku and/or out-of-school activities?

Were you doing any other kind of activities or attending a different Juku?

Why did you decide to do these activities?

Who decided that you take part in these activities?

Do any of your school friends attend same Juku and/or out-of-school activity?

Are there any new friends that you made at Juku and/or out-of-school activity?

How do you think of each Juku and out-of-school activities you attend(ed)?

Do you have dream that you want to achieve?

Do you do anything to make this dream come true?

Do you think school study will be useful/practical for your future?

Do you think Juku study will be useful/practical for your future?

Is the future bright? Gloomy?

Self-value

What kind of person do you think you are?

Is there any aspect of yourself that you dislike?

Do you like or dislike yourself?

Do you think you are 'okay' as you are now?

How do you think other people think of you?

Do you care about those thoughts that other people have about you?

What gives you confidence?

When do you gain confidence?

Who gives you confidence?

When do you feel a sense of achievement?

Do you tend to take a role of a leader? Or do you prefer to follow another person being a leader?

Do you have a close friendship group? Is the friendship group important to you?

Do you think you are accepted by people around you? For example, by family and friends?

Are you satisfied with your records at school and Juku?

What kind of a person do you want to be in the future?

Do you have a role model?

Agency

Who has a say in making decisions? Do you make decisions yourself?

When a decision needs to be made, do you think your opinions are heard and treated well?

When you want to do something or have opinion, do you manage to make it happen?

What do you think about adults?

How do you think adults should interact with young people?

By whom do you think you are influenced the most?

If someone is pressing his/her opinion on you, can you object to it by sharing your opinion?

Is there a difference in how decisions are made in various places such as home, school and Juku?

Why did you decide to attend Juku?

Why did you decide to attend this particular Juku?

Was there ever a time when you wanted to quit Juku? If so, why?

What gives you motivation?

Security

Where is your favourite place?

Where is a place you dislike?

Where do you feel safe and unsafe?

With whom do you feel safe/unsafe?

When some problems happen (not only safety) to you, is there anyone you can share this with?

What do you think brings safety?

Is the way to and from school and Juku safe?

Is your neighbourhood safe?

Are school, Juku and out-of-school safe places?

Is there any bullying around you?

What do you think is the role of school and Juku teachers to assure your safety?

What is your friends' role to assure your safety?

Materiality

Is there anything you want currently?

Are you satisfied with what you own now?

What is your most important thing?

If you need to make a ranking of your most important things, what are the top three?

Do you sometimes feel envious of things other people have?

When you want something, do you buy it with your own money or do you ask your parents to buy it?

What are the things that your parents often buy for you?

On what do you tend to spend your own money?

Are you lucky attending Juku?

Are you aware how much tuition fees cost for Juku and/or out-of-school activities?

If you win the lottery, what do you want to do?

Ecomap, relationship

Why did you place these people in this way on the ecomap?

Between school and Juku, where do you prefer?

What is the difference between school and Juku?

Where is your *Ibasho*?

Are there any good/bad experiences in your friendship?

How are your relationships in these (on eco-map) places?

How do you think friendship should be?

How do you want your friends, family and teachers to interact with you?

If there was one thing you could change about school life, what would you want to change?

If there was one thing you would change about your life, what would you want to change?

Happiness

Is there anyone you feel happy with when you are together?

When do you feel happy?

What do you think is required for your happiness?

Are you satisfied with your life? If you assigned one word to it, what would it be?

What is happiness and unhappiness for you?

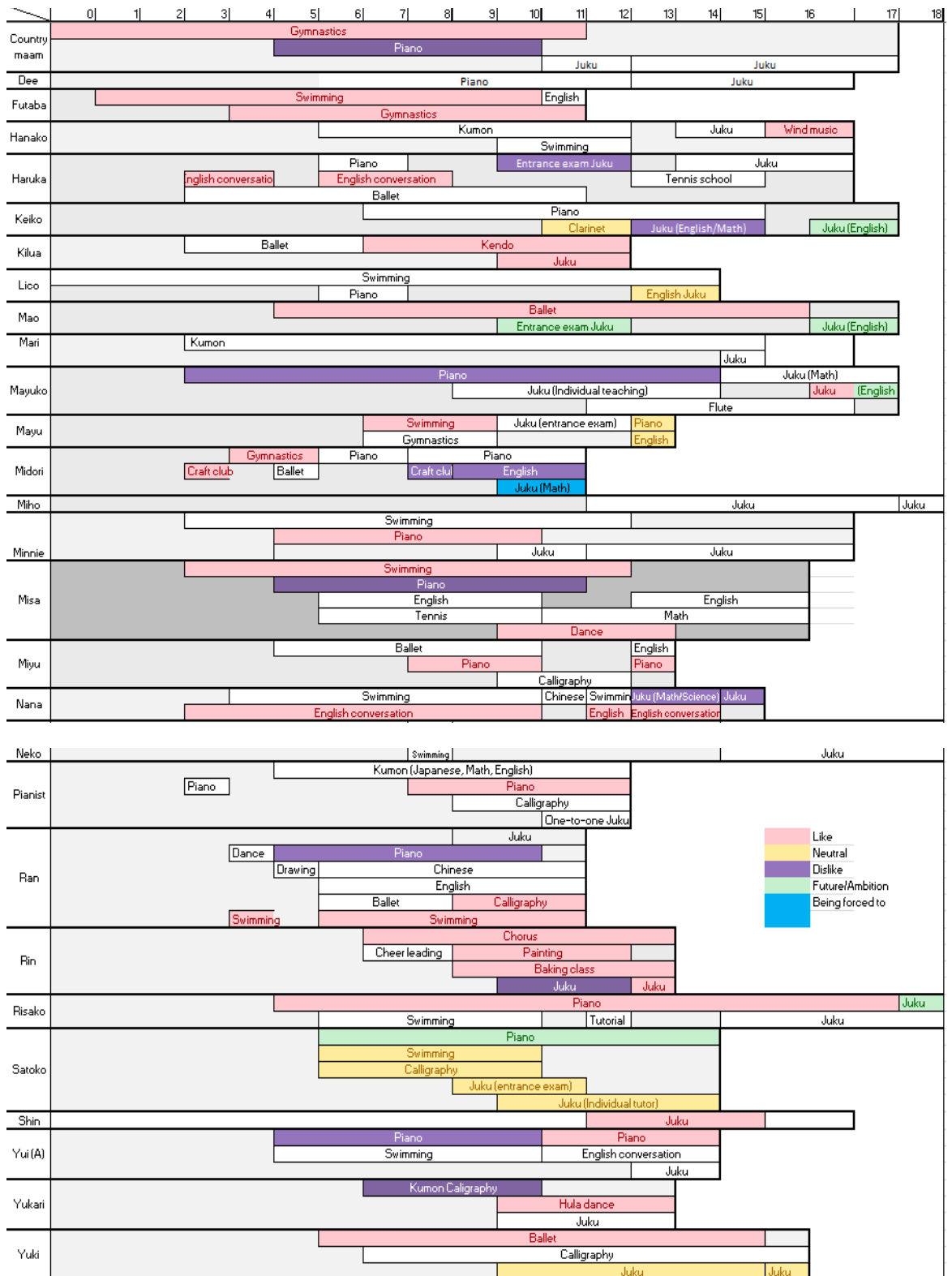
What do you think is important for the happiness of yourself and the people around you?

If you could talk to yourself five years ago and later, what would you say?

Are you satisfied overall with your life?

If you rate your life, what number would it be between 1 and 10?

Appendix 2 Children's experiences in activities and Juku



*Pink: activities participant likes

Purple: activities participant dislikes

Yellow: activities participant feels neutral about

Green: activities participant associates with her future

Appendix 3 Time use data

	Carrie	Charice			Countrymaam				Dee	
	School + Juku	School + Juku	School	School + Club	School + club + Juku	School + School club	School + Juku	School + School club + Juku	School + Juku	School
0-4										
05:00										
05:15										
05:30										
05:45										
06:00		Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep		
06:15									Wake up	Wake up
06:30										
06:45										
07:00	Wake up									
07:15					Wake up					
07:30		Go to school	Go to school	Go to school						
07:45										
08:00										
08:15										
08:30								School (Till 12:00)		
08:45										
09:00	School	School	School	School	School	School	School			
14:30										
14:45								School club		
15:00									School	School
15:15										
15:30										
15:45							Home			
16:00										
16:15										
16:30				Club	School club	School club				
16:45										
17:00							Juku	Juku		
17:15										
17:30		Self study							Dinner	
17:45										
18:00	Juku				Home	Home				
18:15										
18:30						Dinner	Home			
18:45										
19:00						Bath	Dinner	Dinner	Juku	Free
19:15					Slef study					
19:30							Bath	Bath		
19:45										
20:00		English Juku	Free							
20:15										
20:30										
20:45										
21:00				Free	Juku	Study	Study	Study		
21:15										
21:30										
21:45										
22:00					Dinner	Snack	Snack	Snack		
22:15										
22:30					Bath				Sleep	Sleep
22:45										
23:00		Go home and sleep				Study	Study	Study		
23:15										
23:30					Study (Till 1am)					
23:45										
00:00	Depend s				Sleep (at 1)	Sleep (at 1)	Sleep (at 1)			

	Futaba		Hanako			Haruka				
	School + Gym	School + Gym	School + School club	Brass band (Sunday)	School + Juku	School + Juku	School + Club	School	School + Tennis	Tennis club
0-4	Sleep	Sleep			Sleep at 3					
05:00										
05:15										
05:30	Wake up and get ready	Wake up and get ready	Sleep		Wake up	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
05:45										
06:00										
06:15					School					
06:30										
06:45	Go to school	Go to school		Sleep						Go to school
07:00			Wake up			Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	
07:15					Study					
07:30										
07:45						Go to school	Go to school	Go to school	Go to school	
08:00										
08:15										Tennis club (till 13:00)
08:30										
08:45										
09:00				Wake up						
14:30	School	School	School		School	School	School	School	School	Come home
14:45										
15:00										
15:15										
15:30										
15:45										
16:00			School club	Free	School club	School club (Tennis)	School club (Tennis)	Come home	School club (Tennis)	Nap
16:15										
16:30										
16:45										
17:00			Home					Free		
17:15										
17:30										
17:45										
18:00			Dinner					Dinner		
18:15										
18:30										
18:45	Gymnastics						Come home			
19:00										Dinner
19:15				Brass band			Dinner, Bath		Leave home	
19:30		Free			Juku					
19:45										
20:00						Juku	Study	Study	Tennis School	Free
20:15										
20:30										
20:45										
21:00										
21:15										
21:30										
21:45										
22:00										
22:15	Free								Free: Dinner, watching TV etc.	
22:30										
22:45										
23:00					Dinner					
23:15										
23:30					Study		Sleep	Sleep		Sleep
23:45										
00:00	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep (at 1)			Sleep			Sleep	

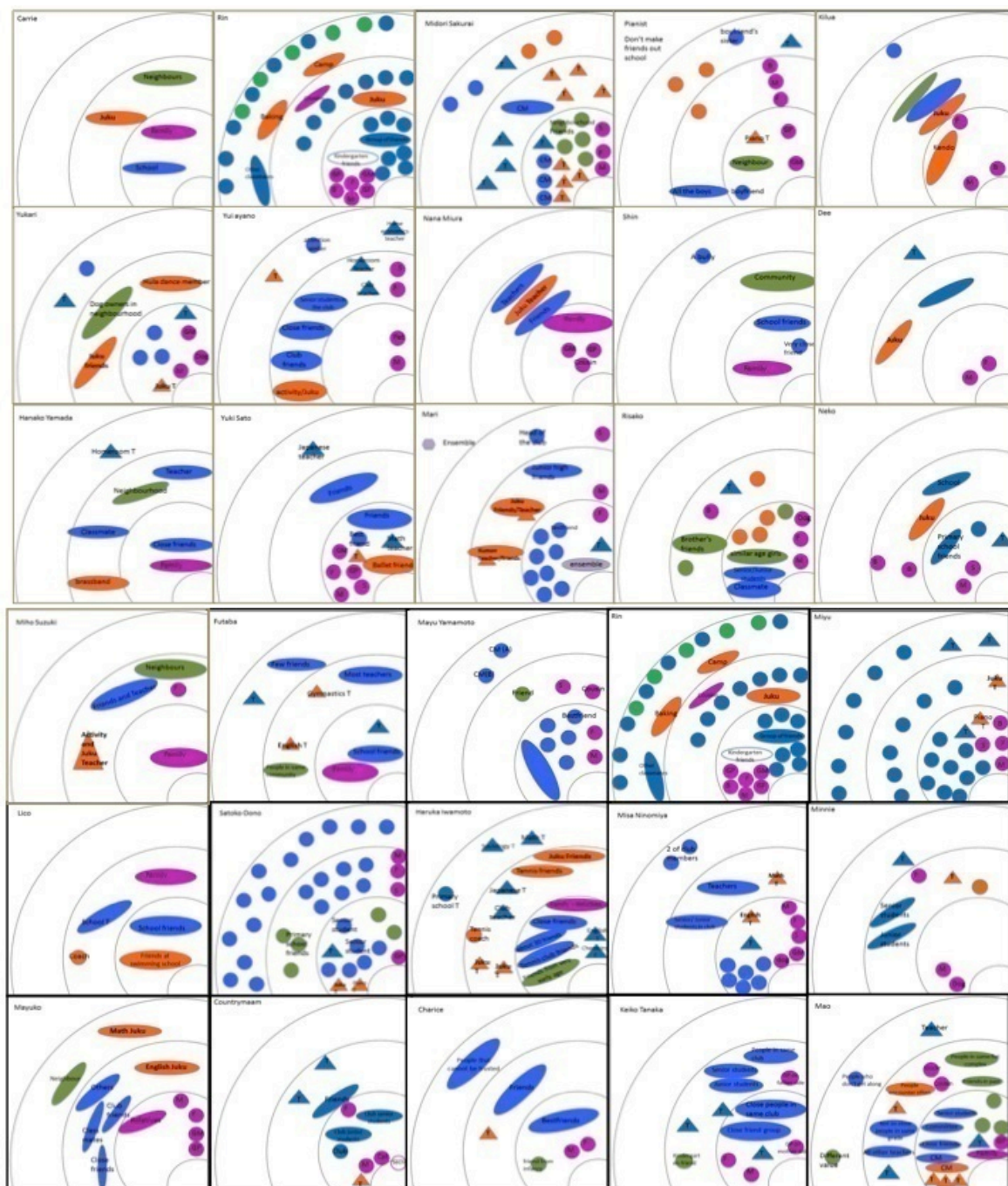
	Keiko			Kilua		Lico		Mao		
	School + Juku	School + Club	School	School + Kendo	School + Juku	School + Club + Juku	School + Swimming	School + Juku	School	Saturday
0-4						Sleep	Sleep			
05:00	Sleep (at 1:30)	Sleep (at 1:30)	Sleep (at 1:30)	Sleep	Sleep	Wake up	Wake up			
05:15								Sleep	Sleep	
05:30				Wake up	Wake up					
05:45										
06:00	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up					Wake up	Wake up	
06:15				Free + Study	Free + Study					
06:30						Prepare + go to school	Prepare + go to school			
06:45										
07:00	Prepare & Go to school	Prepare & Go to school	Prepare & Go to school	Go to school	Go to school					
07:15										
07:30										
07:45										
08:00										
08:15										
08:30										
08:45										
09:00										
	School	School	School	School	School	School	School	School	School	Wake up
14:30										
14:45										
15:00										
15:15										
15:30										
15:45										
16:00			Come home					School festival committee	School festival committee	Self study at Juku (13:00-17:00)
16:15	School club	School club		Get ready	Juku	School club				
16:30										
16:45										
17:00			Free							
17:15										
17:30								Transport		
17:45										
18:00			Dinner			English	Swimming			
18:15										
18:30		Come home						Self study		
18:45										
19:00										
19:15										
19:30	Juku							Juku		
19:45		Dinner							Study	
20:00										
20:15										
20:30										
20:45										
21:00			Study + Free time							
21:15										
21:30										
21:45	Come home									
22:00										
22:15		Study + Free time								
22:30										
22:45										
23:00				Sleep	Sleep					
23:15						Go to sleep	Go to sleep			
23:30	Study									
23:45										
00:00								Sleep	Sleep	Sleep

	Mari		Mayu				Mayuko		Midori					
	School + School club	School + Juku	School + Juku	Only school	School + Piano	School + English	School + Juku (English)	School + Juku (English) + Juku (Math)	School + Juku	School + Piano	School + English			
0-4			Sleep	Sleep	Sleep				Sleep	Sleep	Sleep			
05:00														
05:15														
05:30						Wake up	Wake up							
05:45						Prepare	Prepare							
06:00														
06:15														
06:30	Wake up		Breakfast, Radio	Breakfast, Radio	Breakfast, Radio	leave home	leave home							
06:45														
07:00														
07:15		Wake up	Breakfast					Wake up	Wake up	Wake up				
07:30	Get ready/ go school	Get ready/ go school												
07:45														
08:00	School	School	School	School	School	School	School (Until 13:00)	School	School	School				
08:15														
08:30														
08:45														
09:00														
14:30											13:00- Juku (Math)	School	School	
14:45														
15:00														
15:15									Revision					
15:30														
15:45														
16:00	School club	Free	Get ready		Snack	English		Juku	Piano					
16:15				Snack										
16:30														
16:45														
17:00	Juku		Juku		Study		Leave school			English				
17:15				Piano										
17:30														
17:45														
18:00	Go home				Study									
18:15														
18:30														
18:45														
19:00	Free	Study			Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Juku (English)	Juku (English)	Free	Free			
19:15				Dinner										
19:30														
19:45														
20:00														
20:15				Home/ Dinner								TV	TV	TV
20:30														
20:45	Free/ Homework		Study	Study	Study									
21:00														
21:15														
21:30														
21:45	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep			Sleep	Sleep	Sleep			
22:00														
22:15												Come home	Come home	
22:30														
22:45														
23:00														
23:15														
23:30														
23:45														
00:00														

	Miho	Minnie	Misa			Nana	Pianist			
	School + Juku	School + Juku	School + English	School + Math	School + Club	School + Juku	School + Juku	School + Piano	School + Kumon	School + Calligraphy
0-4						Sleep				
05:00	Wake up					Wake up				
05:15			Sleep	Sleep	Sleep					
05:30						Study				
05:45	Get ready									
06:00	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up					
06:15										
06:30										
06:45										
07:00							Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up
07:15										
07:30										
07:45										
08:00										
08:15										
08:30										
08:45	School		School	School	School		School	School	School	School
09:00										
14:30						School				
14:45	Club	School			Transport					
15:00										
15:15										
15:30										
15:45	Get ready to go to Juku									
16:00			Juku(English)	Come home		Come home	Juku	Piano		Calligraphy
16:15										
16:30					Practice					
16:45										
17:00				Dinner		Dinner				
17:15							Self study		Kumon	
17:30										
17:45										
18:00			Come home							
18:15	Juku									
18:30		Juku	Dinner				Home			
18:45										
19:00					Come home					
19:15										
19:30										
19:45						Juku				
20:00										
20:15										
20:30	Come home									
20:45										
21:00			Free				Study	Study	Study	Study
21:15										
21:30										
21:45										
22:00						Come home				
22:15										
22:30				Come home						
22:45										
23:00						Study				
23:15										
23:30	Sleep		Sleep	Sleep	Sleep					
23:45										
00:00		Sleep				Sleep				

	Ran				Risako		Satoko			
	Juku (Sunday)	Swimmi ng	Chinese & English	Calligra phy	School + one to one	School + Juku	School + Juku	School + Piano		
0-4	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	School + one to one	School + Juku	School + Juku	School + Piano		
05:00										
05:15										
05:30										
05:45										
06:00					Wake up	Wake up				
06:15										
06:30					Wake up	Wake up				
06:45										
07:00					Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	go to school	go to school	Leave home
07:15										
07:30										
07:45		School	School	School	School	School	School	School		
08:00										
08:15										
08:30										
08:45										
09:00										
14:30										
14:45										
15:00										
15:15										
15:30										
15:45	10:00- Juku				School club	School club				
16:00										
16:15			Chinese							
16:30										
16:45										
17:00										
17:15		Swimmin g	English	Calligra phy					Juku	Home
17:30										
17:45										
18:00										
18:15		Play					Piano			
18:30										
18:45										
19:00		Food			Juku		Home			
19:15										
19:30		Food					Dinner	Dinner		
19:45		Free					Juku	Bath	Bath	
20:00	Home									
20:15										
20:30										
20:45										
21:00										
21:15										
21:30										
21:45										
22:00										
22:15	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep						
22:30										
22:45										
23:00										
23:15										
23:30										
23:45										
00:00										

Appendix 4 Eco-map data



* Home: Pink
 School: Blue
 Community: Green
 Juku/training: Orange
 Triangle: Teacher
 Brown square: Public school
 Black square: Private school